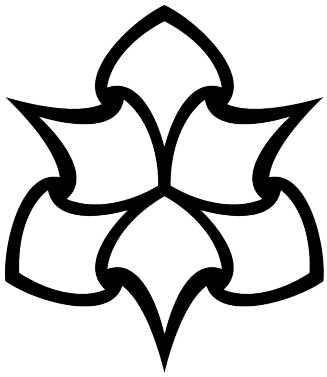

Phase One Process Evaluation Report

The Getting Out for Good (GOFG) Project

April 2020

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Acronyms

CITE	City in the Community
CMBG	Collyhurst and Moston Boxing Gym
EHCPEHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
GOFG	Getting out for Good
G&YW	Girls and Young Women
IDM	I Define Me
MMU	Manchester Metropolitan University
MOS SSSI	MOS Social Support Survey Instrument
MYCS	Manchester Centre for Youth Studies
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SWEMWBS	Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale
SWLS	Satisfaction with Life Scale
TAG	The Averment Group
TOC	Theory of Change
TP	Teenage pregnancy

Contents

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of the independent phase one, process evaluation of the Getting Out for Good (GOFG) project at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) which operated between January 2017 and July 2019. This section introduces the GOFG project, its context, and explains the aims and objectives of the evaluation and the evaluation methodology.

1.1 I Define Me

In 2017, Comic Relief supported nine projects to implement multi-partner, collaborative approaches to affect change in the lives of gang affected girls and young women (G&YW), and their families and communities. This transnational programme called 'I Define Me' was developed by Comic Relief in response to wider research and evidence that shows how gang-involved or affected G&YW have to navigate a range of harmful environments which can expose them to high levels of sexual exploitation and increased criminal activity.

The I Define Me programme seeks to understand what approaches for gang-involved or affected G&YW work in different contexts. It is hoped that knowledge gained from the projects will improve understanding of the context and situation of girls and young women who are gang affected, and how interventions have been designed/implemented to respond to this (or not). Learning from all projects is feeding into a final research-informed framework aimed at assessing how girls and young women are impacted by youth violence, gang-influence and complex social needs.

The high level 'I Define Me' Theory of Change is presented in Appendix One.

'I Define Me' was funded by Comic Relief as well as the Tampon Tax Fund (through a partnership between HM Government and Comic Relief). There are four projects in the UK, three in Bogota, Colombia and two in South Africa. Manchester Metropolitan University is one of the UK 'I Define Me' projects who are supporting gang affected young women. The MMU project is called 'Getting Out for Good'.

1.2 The Getting Out for Good Project: Preventing Gangs through Participation

"Getting Out for Good action-research project works with at-risk young women and girls across Greater Manchester to understand the challenges they face in their local communities and to help them build positive social networks. By minimising harm from negative peer-networks, the project hopes to enable them build confidence to make choices away from risky situations or behaviours, serious youth violence or gang-influence." MMU, MCYS 2019.

Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) is the lead organisation of the GOFG project. The project was co-designed by MMU with The Averment Group. The GOFG project was established in spring 2017. It seeks to engage with G&YW (14 – 24 years) at risk of gang involvement in the Greater Manchester area. The project specifically targets G&YW who have been identified as being at risk of serious gang related youth violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and modern slavery. GOFG sought to achieve outcomes by addressing the multiple systemic vulnerabilities that women and girls face, this includes: living in residential care; a history of abuse or neglect; experience of loss; low self-esteem; learning disabilities or poor mental health; living in a gang neighbourhood; or, lacking friends of the same age.

The G&YW who are referred to the project are given an intensive three-month programme of mentoring, advice and activities by the charity Positive Steps together with local sport, art and

cultural providers. In phase one of GoFG total of 92 referrals were received from agencies who felt that G&YW attending their provision were in need, or at risk of harm. Of these 92 G&YW, were engaged (i.e. they attended at least one mentoring session and/or taster event). Of the 60 young women, 45 engaged with GoFG over a longer period of time, usually in the region of 3-6 months. With a focus on boxing and football, supported by youth theatre and film-making, the G&YW help their peers to address pathways into and out of gang involvement, devising their own solutions through up-skilling and resilience building. The offers available from the GOFG partners are:

1.2.1 Collyhurst and Moston Boxing Gym (CMBG): CMBG is a charitable local amateur and professional boxing club based in North Manchester. Formed in 1917, CMBG offers weekly boxing sessions for young people aged 8-24yrs both male, and female. The head coach Tommy McDonagh also offers on-site alternative education provision to young people excluded from mainstream education in the local area. CMBG were contracted to GOFG to provide weekly boxing sessions to young women over the three-year life of the project, as well as well as provide taster sessions for each incoming cohort. One CMBG AQA qualification in basic boxing skills was delivered on each taster day.

1.2.2 MAD Theatre Company (MAD): A charity that provides quality and affordable drama workshops for disadvantaged young people and adults in Greater Manchester. Partnering with local organisations MAD enables young people to gain experience and skills in all aspects of performance to increase their confidence, self- esteem and life skills to improve their education and employment opportunities. As well as offering accreditation and employment they also devise and perform original plays at numerous professional theatres throughout Greater Manchester. MAD were contracted to GOFG to provide weekly theatre session with young women referred to the project, as well as provide taster sessions for each incoming cohort. One MAD Theatre Company AQA qualification was delivered on each taster day.

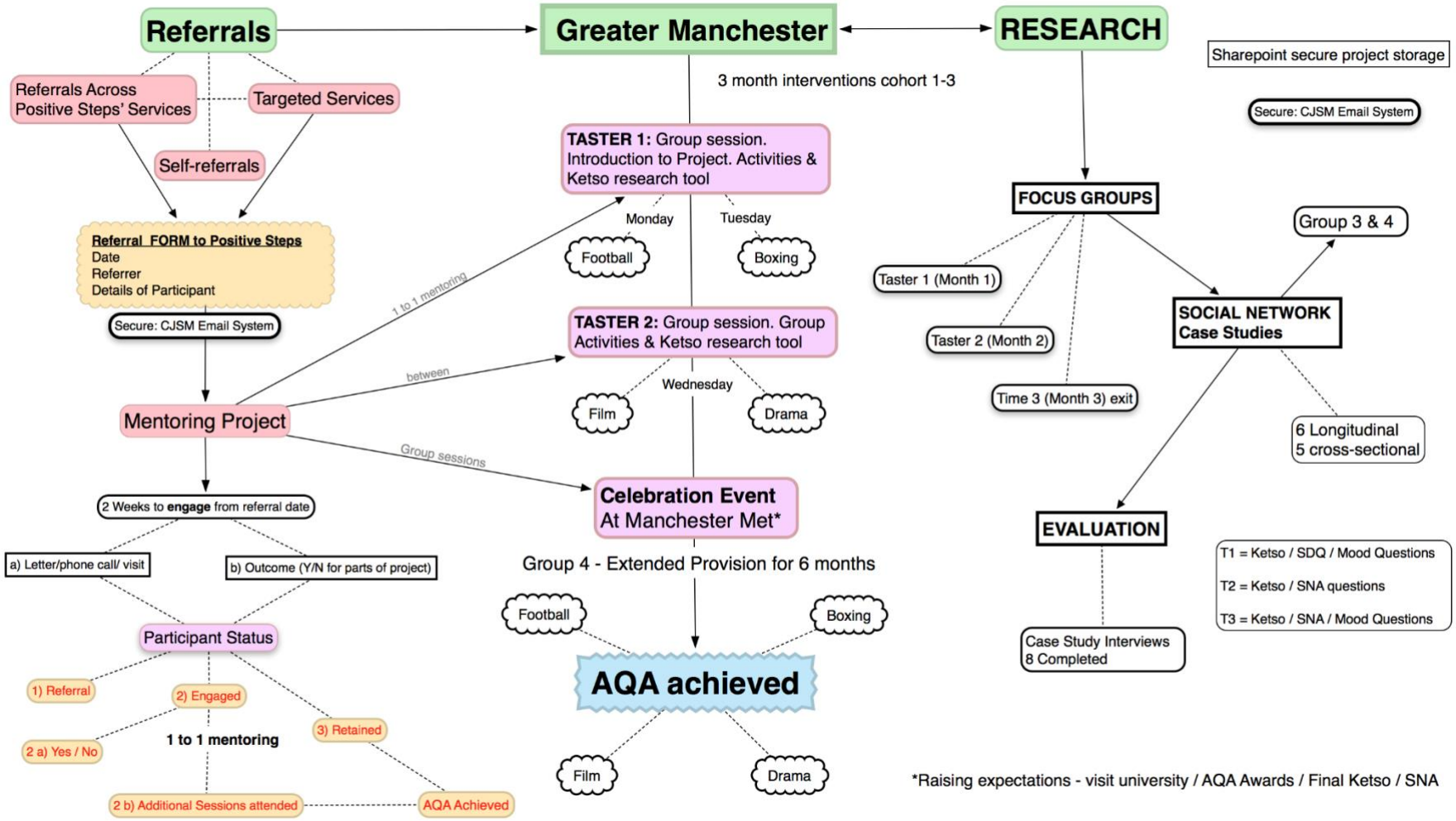
1.2.3 Sue and Jim Filmmakers: Sue and Jim were contracted to GOFG to provide weekly filmmaking sessions with young women referred onto the project. As well as documenting the process of G04G and providing an end of project short documentary. 1x AQA qualifications were delivered on taster days, and a further 2 in editing and production when the cohort were engaged in regular weekly activities.

1.2.4 City in the Community (CITC): Established as a charity in 1986 CITC works with young people in the community to promote health, wellbeing and confidence. It also works to increase access to jobs and training for young people interested in football. CITC was contracted to G04G to provide taster sessions to cohorts of young women entering the project, interested young women were then signposted to existing to CITC sessions in their local area. 1x AQA qualifications were delivered on taster days.

Through the established citywide links and multi-modal approach, GOFG aims to engage with G&YW in their locality to address their specific issues, while engaging them in positive sporting and cultural activities. Additionally, through a successful model of peer mentoring delivered by Positive Steps in Oldham, identified G&YW meeting referral criteria are assigned an experienced peer mentor who will work with them to address issues specific to their needs. Referrals criteria are: females; aged 14-24 years; and, at risk of CSE and / or serious youth violence in Greater Manchester.

A project process diagram is presented in Figure One.

Figure One: GOFG Project Process



1.3 Governance and ethics

The GOFG project during phase one was led by Dr Deborah Jump and supported by Dr Susan O'Shea at MMU. The Project governance was based in the Manchester Centre for Youth Studies (MCYS) at MMU and was managed by a bi-monthly board of trustees overseen by the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Professor Richard Greene.

Ethics to conduct the research element was acquired through MMU's ethics board and due diligence was completed on all partners. Legally binding contracts were acquired with each partner and ratified by the legal team at MMU. Positive Steps were the main provider and responsible for sourcing referrals and co-designing referral pathways. Targets were established by Comic Relief and MMU project team and PS mentors worked to achieve these. Referrals were received by various organisations, ranging from Early Help (EHCP), Missing from Home (MFH), Looked After Children (LAC), Youth Justice (YJ), and Teenage Pregnancy (TP). Referrals were also sourced via education providers, and safeguarding services outside of core offer of Positive Steps.

It was the MMU project team's responsibility to co-ordinate the taster sessions (held twice for every cohort) and run the focus groups with each cohort. The project team also issued the AQA qualifications which were mainly gained at these taster sessions.

1.4 Data collection

Data collection systems were established between Positive Steps and MMU, and it was agreed that Positive Steps would collect data on:

1. Intervention type: including group session, one to one mentor session, phone calls and taster sessions.
2. Source of referral: LAC / YJ / TP / EHCP / TP and age at referral.
3. Missing from home data.

The MMU project team provided Positive Steps mentors with assessment battery tools and referral and consent forms. Mentors were tasked to complete the assessment battery tools and provide the MMU project team with these at T1 and T2.

The Averment Group collected data on the identified case studies, and MMU conducted a small and exploratory SNA study. Data was securely stored on SharePoint (MMU secure data server), and any sensitive information between partners was emailed via the secure CJSM network. Referral data and T1 assessment tools was collected at the beginning of each new cohort, and follow-on T2 data was sent at the end of each cohort, usually three months.

MMU has a specified data sharing policy, as well as a safeguarding policy. Risk assessments were also conducted prior to taster and celebration events. Celebration events were usually held at the end of each cohort (3-6 months later) and this is when the young people were awarded their AQA certificates, and an evaluative focus group could be conducted. Reports to Comic Relief were twice a year in the format of 6 month and twelve-month monitoring reports.

1.5 Evaluating the Getting Out for Good Project

The Averment Group (TAG) was commissioned by MMU as the local evaluators of the GOFG project. The process evaluation of the first phase of GOFG aimed to explore the functioning of services and systems and identify areas where improvements might be made. The study did not seek to identify the impact of the GOFG project. Instead, the evaluation examined:

Implementation: GOFG structure, resources and processes of delivery.
Mechanisms of impact: how GOFG activities and their interactions with young people may enable change.
Context: the external factors that may influence the delivery and functioning of GOFG

At the outset of the evaluation, the research team worked in collaboration with the project leads to understand the intended outcomes of GOFG together with the wider I Define Me Theory of Change (ToC) to develop a GOFG specific TOC and refine the programme theory using a logic model approach.

A qualitative case study design utilising narrative life story theory and approach was also used to gather a contextualised understanding of the perceived impacts of GOFG based on the views and experiences of G&YW participating in the project. A small case-based personal network study was carried out to assess participants' social support structures at the beginning and towards the end of their time on the project.

Quantitative methods included a psychometric test battery that was utilised at the start and end point of G&YW's involvement with the GOFG project. Project throughput data was also collected and analysed.

The process evaluation is also guided by the DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability) (OECD, 1991)[i]. These standards guide credible and useful evidence collection to and are used widely in programme evaluation and international development.

The output of the TAG evaluation is this evaluation report.

1.5.1 The Averment Group

The Averment Group Limited is an independent organisation who provide evidence-based research, monitoring and evaluation and development consultancy services to government and non-government organisations, local authorities, charities, universities and other agencies to reduce social and economic disadvantage and translate evidence into policy and strategy.

1.6 Report structure

The report is presented in the following structure:

***Chapter 1 Introduction*:** an overview of GOFG, the project context, and its operational mechanisms.
Chapter 2 Literature Review.
Chapter 2 GOFG Theory of Change (ToC): this section introduces the initial GOFG which was formulated by TAG in conjunction with MMU which was utilised to guide the evaluation.
Chapter 3 Methodology: describes the mixed methods approach of the evaluation.
Chapter 4 Analysis and results: presents the qualitative and quantitative findings.
Chapter 5 GOFG Theory of Change revisited*:* this section revisits the GOFG ToC and reviews its elements against the evaluation analysis results.
Chapter 6 Conclusion: this section presents conclusions and summary of learning, mechanisms of impact, context and research processes.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The GOFG project was funded by Comic Relief as a collaborative, multi-partner project aiming to support G&YW effectively in reducing their likelihood of joining gangs, reducing the harm they face within gangs and supporting them to leave gangs. The funding sought to ensure that: fewer G&YW would enter harmful and risky gang situations; that girls and young women, already in gangs, experience less harm from violence, abuse and exploitation; and, more girls and young women leave violent, abusive and exploitative gang situations.

Gangs and gang related vulnerabilities are complex. The violent, abusive and exploitative gang situations that G&YW could be facing will likely involve complex vulnerabilities, contexts and influences. It is important to identify what literature and evidence the GOFG considered in the development of the project Theory of Change and intervention approach. The GOFG conceptual framework also guided the evaluation enabling consideration of evidence integration and the measurement of clearly defined outcome goals. The conceptual framework of GOFG includes research regarding gangs, gang related vulnerabilities and gang contexts for girls and young women together with identity, narratives and identity within narratives. It also explores the parameters of identified vulnerabilities and the evidence base of intervention approaches. This section then moves onto consider how the evaluation can explore narrative identity of the girls and young women who the GOFG project is working with.

2.2 Gangs

At the inception of the project, GOFG sought to target G&YW who were at risk of gang engagement and involvement. The parameters of the GOFG target cohort group of G&YW were informed by a review of the available literature.

Defining gangs is a contentious issue and there are many provided definitions and typologies over the years; reaching a consensus has proved difficult. The 2010 Government report "Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity[ii]" distinguishes between:

- ''Peer Group' – a relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.
- 'Street Gang' – groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity..
- 'Organised Criminal Gangs' – A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.

This is a useful starting point of understanding, but the relationship between the three groups is complex and fluid. Importantly, researchers[iii] highlight the importance of exploring an individual's own sense of their involvement in collective offending and avoid labelling and simplistic assumptions about gangs.

In 2009, Firmin argued that the male dominated account of gang violence threatened to delay long-term progress in making change[iv]. Thankfully, research has now moved away from a previous reliance on male gang members and adult practitioners as their source of information about females[v].

More recent research provides evidence of women and girls who are gang members themselves, or who are involved in facilitating gang-related criminal activities, for example, by storing or carrying

drugs or money[vi]. There are also findings relating to the sexual exploitation of women and girls by gang members[vii].

More evidence was drawn from the 2013, Centre for Mental Health report "A Need to Belong: What Leads Girls to Join Gangs"[viii]. In this comprehensive review of international literature on girls involved in gangs and an analysis of data collected for more than 8,000 young people, they identified a wide range of risk factors for females to become members of gangs. These include:

- Severe childhood behavioural problems and mental ill health.
- Poor maternal mental health, exposure to violence in the home and experience of trauma.
- Low academic aspiration and disengagement with school.
- Association with antisocial or gang-involved peers and peer rejection or victimisation.
- Feeling unsafe or marginalised in their neighbourhood.
- High income inequalities and social influences that devalue female roles.

There were 80 young women with gang associations identified in their sample (with a mean age of 15). Amongst this sample, on average, young women involved in gangs:

- had a threefold greater risk of health and social difficulties compared with average youth justice entrants and over double the number of vulnerabilities of other screened females.
- The more risk factors a young person accumulates, the greater their chance of being identified as involved in gangs.
- Young women with links to gangs were generally four times more likely than other females entering the Youth Justice System to report poor relationships with their families and peers.
- Parental imprisonment, substance misuse or poor mental health were particularly linked to gang membership.
- They were nearly four times more likely to have a sibling involved in antisocial behaviour than other girls being screened.
- Clear links between experiences of victimisation (including sexual abuse, witnessing or experiencing domestic violence) and gang association.
- They were three times more likely to be identified as victims of sexual abuse compared with other young women being screened. They were around three times more likely to witness violence and to experience physical abuse and neglect in their homes and about four times more likely to disclose being bullied than other females in the sample.
- Gang-involved young women were around three or four times more likely to have histories of running away, poor educational performance and exclusion from school than the average female youth justice entrant.
- They were also more than five times more likely than other young women to be involved in sexually risky or sexually harmful behaviour.
- There was clear evidence of the psychological vulnerability of gang-involved young women with just over a quarter identified by workers as having a suspected diagnosable mental health problem. 30% were also identified as self-harming or at risk of suicide. 30% also identified having sleeping or eating problems.
- Nearly 40% of girls with gang associations showed signs of behavioural problems before the age of twelve.
- Young women linked to gangs were three times more likely than other females in this sample to be identified with signs of early persistent conduct problems.

In 2019 England's Children's Commissioner estimated that 34% of children involved in gangs are reportedly girls. In the "Keeping Safe" report the commissioner warned that many of the mistakes that were made over child sexual exploitation 20 years ago are being repeated today, with

organised criminal gangs involved in the drugs trade grooming and exploiting children who have fallen through the gaps.

The Children's Commissioner[ix] has also identified a number of different roles girls take up within gangs:

- Gangster girls: young women who adopt male personas within gangs;
- Female family members of gang members;
- Wifeys/girlfriends: young women in a recognised relationship with gang-involved males;
- Baby-mothers: young women who have children with gang-involved males;
- Links: young women who are associated through 'casual' sex with one or more members of the gang.

The UK Children's Commissioner recently highlighted how *"trapped in a cycle of threats, intimidation, and violence, there are thousands of girls caught up in gangs in England who are at risk of both criminal and sexual exploitation"*[x]. In the Centre for Social Justice, Girls and Gangs XLP report[xi], another resonating conclusion can be found:

"in listening to girls' stories, we have heard, amongst other things, about the toll gang life is taking on their education, and their families, friends and communities; the horror of sexual exploitation; and of an increase in criminal activity. Yet we also found several things that can be done to help girls exit gang association, namely: mapping the problem; taking advantage of specific 'windows of opportunity' to access girls; providing effective mentoring; ensuring an appropriate police response; and making sure gang-affected schools are open to support."

This is not an exhaustive account of the research that informed the development of the GOFG project but is a summary of main influences. Together, this literature regarding gangs and specifically girls who are, or are at risk of, gang engagement enabled the GOFG to look beyond a simplistic label of gangs, towards the vulnerabilities that girls who are gang engaged may experience.

2.3 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes[xii]. Given its prevalence amongst gang engaged G&YW, it is important to better understand CCE in order to guide the approach of GOFG.

The Children's Society 2018 identifies stages of recruitment in child exploitation[xiii]. The first is a *targeting stage* which is when an exploiter targets a young person who is vulnerable, reducing their chances of getting caught. This is suggested to include observing a young person, finding out a young person's vulnerabilities, needs and wants, glamourising their lifestyle, gaining and developing a young person's trust and sharing information with other members of their gang. An *experience stage* is where an exploiter might try to get a young person used to their lifestyle or train them up in what they're doing. This may include making a young person feel wanted, giving them gifts and rewards, including them in their activities, testing out loyalty, listening and remembering what a young person says, offering protection, giving a young person a sense of belonging, praising and asking to see and test their skills. A *hooked stage* is where an exploiter will make a young person feel like they are a member of their gang, even though they're just exploiting them. This is suggested to include having an identity in the group, a bigger role in the group (e.g. people running for them), engaging in thrill seeking behaviour/ committing low level crimes, feeling more powerful, a dependency created by their exploiter, engaging in activities such as drugs, alcohol and sexual behaviour and being asked for favours/to keep secrets/to recruit others to the gang. A *trapped stage* is where a young person feels dependent on the group. Their relationship with their exploiter may

start to become unpleasant, as their exploiter's true intents or character is revealed. At this stage a young person may experience threatening behaviour, attempts to reinforce their dependency/make them indebted to their exploiter, physical violence and sexual assaults, attempts to isolate young people from their family, friends and society, humiliation, feeling trapped and drug addiction.

2.4 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

In 2013, the Office of the Children's Commissioner published a qualitative study of gang-associated sexual violence towards, and exploitation of young people in England entitled '*It's Wrong … But You Get Used to It*[xiv]. The report formed part of the Inquiry of the Office of the Children's Commissioner into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups. The research involved in-depth interviews with 188 young people aged between 13 and 28 years across England and uncovered disturbing evidence. Young people identified many different forms of sexual victimisation within the gang environment, where young women were pressured or coerced into sexual activity. This included sex in return for status or protection; sex as payment for drugs, alcohol or the clearance of a debt, as well as numerous instances of multiple rape. Girls can be used to "get back" at rival gang members by being forced to offer them sex in order to set them up for assault or to show "disrespect" by forcing sex on a female relative of a gang member. Young women being expected to have sex with a number of gang members as part of a membership initiation to gain admittance. Significantly, many of the young people who were interviewed saw rape and sexual assault as perfectly "normal" sexual behaviour, with no conception that it was actually an offence, or indeed, wrong.

Importantly the report concludes by highlighting how we must work with all children to ensure women and girls are treated with respect, that there is a clear message that the sexual objectification of females will not be tolerated, and that children are brought up with hope and opportunities, channelling their energies and resourcefulness for their own and society's good.

2.5 Other vulnerabilities

This is a very brief introduction to the complexity of vulnerabilities that girls and young women who are gang engaged may face. It is not an exhaustive account of the research nor of all vulnerabilities that they may present. Drawing on the available research, the GOFG also considered wider vulnerabilities that included specific CCE issues such as county lines and also other potential group engagements such as extremism in developing its approach.

2.6 The GOFG Cohort of G&YW

The literature review enabled the GOFG project to explore gang engaged G&YW and better understand the complexity of their vulnerabilities. Initially, the GOFG project set out to address issues of gang related CCE/CSE, and partnered with agencies that had a prior track record of working with G&YW who had reported being involved or seriously at risk. Evidence from the aforementioned literature and local evaluation reports[xv] of these agencies suggested that G&YW in specific localities of Greater Manchester were identified as being significantly at risk.

The cohorts varied in terms of vulnerabilities, and some G&YW were certainly involved in, or certainly on the margins of CSE/CCE. Cohort 1 (GFG 1-14[1]) was piloted, and issues of CSE/CCE were prevalent in this cohort, however, this was not entirely reflective across the piece (GOFG 16-60). Differing complex vulnerabilities also started to emerge beyond cohort 1 and psychometric measurements in combination with KETSO and case studies (discussed further below) highlighted issues pertaining to poor mental and emotional wellbeing, bullying, social isolation, and school exclusion.

[1] GOFG project identifier numbers

As discussed above in the Centre for Mental Health Report (2013), these risk factors can increase the likelihood of G&YW being vulnerable to exploitation, as they can have accumulative effects on young women's propensity to join gangs. In as much, as they G&YW in the cohorts did not identify as being in a gang, there accumulative risk factors arguably placed them more at risk of being exploited by those who did.

2.7 Intervention approaches

The Centre for Social Justice, Girls and Gangs XLP report[xvi] summarises how we need to prevent more girls from getting involved in gang life in the first place, minimise the damage they cause to themselves and others whilst they are in gangs, and ensure effective support is in place to help them exit. In order to do so, five areas are suggested where action would make a real difference:

- Effective mapping of the problem;
- Taking advantage of specific 'windows of opportunity' to access girls;
- Providing effective mentoring;
- Ensuring an appropriate police response;
- Making sure gang-affected schools are open to support.

A previous lack of female specific research regarding gang engaged G&YW and evidence of suitable response has begun to be addressed by emerging contemporary evidence. The reasons young women join gangs overlap in some instances with those of male peers, but they can also be quite different. This means that efforts to prevent or address gang association among females need to be gender-specific[xvii]. In addition, projects that empower both young women and men to break the cycle of power and control in relationships is essential to supporting young people away from gang life[xviii].

The 2013, Centre for Mental Health report "A Need to Belong: What Leads Girls to Join Gangs"[xix] identifies how preventive measures need to tackle multiple risk factors, for example to support secure attachment in early years, to reduce maltreatment and neglect, to promote positive parenting techniques, to strengthen girls' self- esteem and to respond quickly to the first signs of mental ill health among children. It also identifies how programmes working with gang members need to be sensitive to the specific requirements of young women, for example to foster respectful, collaborative and empowering relationships to strengthen self-esteem, to provide safe housing and to offer positive female role models.

A number of approaches were therefore drawn together by GOFG.

2.7.1 Mentoring

Mentoring as a positive intervention is well documented in criminal justice literature[xx] and has been used somewhat effectively by young people's services for the past 10 years[xxi]. Importantly, it was noted that whilst mentoring can be a valuable part of preventative work and there is evidence to suggest that it can have positive impacts if it is delivered in the right way to the right young people, other evidence shows that mentoring can sometimes have non-significant impacts, and if not implemented carefully there is also the risk of causing harm. Mentoring relationships are embedded in other types of relationships and the quality and success of mentoring is dependent on these additional network structures. Recent work[xxii] exploring the role of mentoring in a network context highlights some of this complexity and the importance of ensuring the match between mentor and mentee. A good fit between mentee and mentor will help build complimentary, rather than competing, relationships in the young person's personal network, but also help expand their social capital by linking them with additional support networks and opportunities in the wider community.

In this project we were originally informed by the literature on mentoring as a form of gang intervention. We sourced reports from scholars who had evaluated mentoring approaches and gang interventions, and those who had worked specifically with G&YW[xxiii]. In line with research that suggested that mentoring could be effective when delivered effectively[xxivxxv], GOFG adapted their approach to include: (1) A programme that had a clear theory of change, (2) An empirically based 'best practices' approach, and (3) a strong relationship to be forged between youth and mentors. We aligned with mentoring services that had track records of working with young people at risk of CCE/CSE, and piloted cohort 1 with a mentoring service that worked previously with those deemed 'at risk' of joining gangs.

Cohort 1 pilot informed us that young women who came into contact with the mentoring services were not those who could be classified as being in gangs, and therefore we expanded our mentoring offer to another provider that worked more closely with issues that were more relevant to those being identified. These included: missing from home referrals, school exclusions and repeat truants, early help services, teenage pregnancy, and self -referrals from young women who deemed themselves to be at risk of any of the above.

2.7.2 Sports

As this project suggests, sport can effectively engage young people on the verge and/or at risk of offending, by providing diversionary activities when they otherwise may be involved in anti-social behaviour. The evidence for schemes such as these is also well documented elsewhere (Jump 2015) especially in regard to sport's ability to engage young people at crucial times, dismantle negative peer groups, and provide non-conventional classroom-based education to those who are currently disengaged[xxvi]. In community and local settings, sport has been effective in attracting young people and improving performance in activities in which they are not normally motivated to engage[xxvii]. Moreover, this method of active learning commonly seen in sport has been identified as a key element in the 'what works' literature on reducing offending[xxviii]. Sport, therefore, is a valuable resource in motivating young people who are both marginalized, and reluctant to engage in conventional positive activities. Boxing and football can contribute towards a reduction in the need for interventions by criminal justice agencies and police services when delivered correctly[xxix]. We therefore intended to embed this thinking, and we were steered by the 'what works' literature when partnering with the sporting programmes being delivered across Greater Manchester. We delivered gender specific sporting activity in the form of boxing and football, and coupled with the mentoring aspect, this project demonstrated some success. By working closely with these programmes, we intended to enhance these sporting activities for the young women identified to further contribute towards resilience building, enhancing personal aspirations, facilitate teamwork and positive peer networks, while simultaneously up-skilling the G&YW for the job market with nationally recognised AQA qualifications.

2.7.3 Drama

Our research approach is participatory ensuring G&YW have opportunities to have their voices heard. We wanted the GOFG project to engage with creative activities that would help young people get to know each other at the start of the project, but would also help them build confidence, learn new skills and creatively explore some of the issues that were important to them by constructing their own narratives. Arts participation is thought to have a beneficial impact on emotional and social well-being. A UK based study[xxx] explored this claim along with the assumption that arts participation can contribute to social capital by increasing confidence and the friendship networks of participants. The study found that young people can have negative experiences, such non-participation or dropping out and alienation, as well as positive experiences, like making new friends and raised aspirations. We were mindful of this when designing the interventions and felt a combination of sport and arts-based activities would be able to provide range of engagement

opportunities for the G&YW. A review of the literature in this area suggested that drama and film-making activities could help provide the stimulus and cohesion needed to bring new cohorts of participants together. Drama and film were initially offered separately but their aims and objectives became more intertwined to fit the needs and interests of participants.

Drama is a creative engagement tool that can be useful for breaking down barriers between individuals in new groups. A study[xxxi] in England reviewing the impact of youth theatre provision offers evidence of the positive impact on the social and personal development of young people taking part as they transition from youth to young adulthood. A recent report[xxxii] assessed the impact of a drama-based intervention in Liverpool exploring youth crime issues including deterring young people from gangs and gun crime. It found that a multi-agency and interactive approach to drama and performance, that was authentic and relevant to young people's lived experiences, was better able to connect with them in engaging and meaningful ways.

Film-making provides another medium for young people to have their voices heard. A study based in the North of England[xxxiii] suggests that documentary film-making empowers young people to explore the politics of place and space and the interactions they have with violence and youth exclusion. The study highlights how leisure activities can function as a way to keep young people occupied and out of trouble but without purpose it risks becoming another form of social control. However, the study suggests that the young person-led documentary form can help centre youth voices and experiences where trusted adults work with young people as advocates and allies as they explore the issues that matter to them most. Another video-making project[xxxiv] provides evidence that working with young people facing school exclusion and subsequently social exclusion can have a positive impact on that young person's self-esteem and identity construction as they build social and personal skills whilst developing a video output as a group.

2.8 Integrated and responsive approach

The reviewed evidence regarding approaches guided the intervention design and as a result, GOFG did not specifically set out to address complexities such as CCE/CSE but take a more youth work approach. This approach enabled the project to be responsive and flexible to the differing presenting needs of the G&YW being referred and adapt if necessary when a full assessment by a mentor had been completed.

2.9 Identity

The explored literature highlighted the importance of identity in understanding group and gang engagement and also in understanding how gang disengagement can be supported. Identity can be thought of as a process of identification rather than something a person is. The development of a personal identity; an overarching set of culturally-accepted, self-relevant values, beliefs and future goals[xxxv] begins in early-adolescence and is an important psychosocial task throughout the teen and emerging adult years[xxxvi]. Research suggests[xxxvii] that people are motivated to form identities (or to identify) to enable them to feel a sense of distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy, self-esteem, continuity and meaning. These identity needs also include the need for control, certainty, purpose and significance in our lives. Identities which are most important to people are those which fulfil these needs. Identity motivates existential (human) needs and drivers (e.g. for a sense of purpose and belonging in the world) and influences our actions on a daily basis[xxxviii].

It is suggested that identity is not a 'thing' that people possess, and people form identity for their own reasons and purposes[xxxix]. It has also been outlined how identity is shaped by biological characteristics, psychological elements and our cultural contexts, which provide opportunities for our needs and capabilities to be expressed[xl].

Identity development involves exploring and committing to a set of personally meaningful values, beliefs, and future aspirations[xli] and this process has been shown to be an important predictor of risk behaviour in adolescence[xlii]. Two underlying processes of identity development have been identified. During self-exploration, individuals consider different identity-related options such as career paths and family roles. In identity commitment, individuals commit to an overarching personal identity[xliii]. Adolescents move toward a mature adult identity (i.e., high-identity exploration and commitment) by either experiencing a period of uncommitted, active identity exploration and then committing to well- explored identity options or by re-analysing and re-integrating earlier identity commitments or identifications with others into a well-explored personal identity[xliv]. Importantly, the neurobiological processes that define adolescence and also those that influence risk-taking are complex, and the role they play is emerging as a key factor in adolescent behaviour. These processes must be understood in the context of psychological development and social influences[xlv]. To put these theories and influences simply, it is suggested that there are four key tasks to adolescence:

1. to stand out—to develop an identity and pursue autonomy,
2. to fit in—to find comfortable affiliations and gain acceptance from peers,
3. to measure up—to develop competence and find ways to achieve, and
4. to take hold—to make commitments to particular goals, activities, and beliefs.

Psycho-social theory considers the role and interaction that both society and individual characteristics play in identity formation[xlvi] and focuses on how people are affected by and interact with wider society[xlvii]. How does exploitation affect the interplay and process of identity as individuals grow into, through and out of risky and vulnerable contexts, connecting their internal worlds with the social worlds they live in? The evolution of identity may be notably impeded if an individual does not possess the capability to consistently analyse and make sense of critical life events[xlviii].

How best can we understand the needs and impact of an intervention upon a young person who is gang engaged or being exploited? Identity issues appear to be important in understanding why people may engage with gangs and then also why and how they may choose to disengage. Is it possible to explore whether the GOFG intervention may be affecting the interplay and process of identity as G&YW working with the project grow into, through and out of risky and vulnerable contexts?

In order to enable the evaluation to explore identity and de-identification / disengagement from a group a focus on the individual's narratives about key events, significant relationships would enable the evaluation to identify recurring themes in the narrative.

2.10 Life stories

There is a growing body of research around life stories and narratives. The components of this work include life narratives, thought to be constructed to convey meaningful perceptions of self, identity, and reality. It is therefore likely that concepts of identity are embedded within narrative discourse[xlix]. Narrative identity is the story of the self that weaves together the reconstructed past, the perceived present, and the imagined future, providing an individual with a sense of unity and meaning[l].

Narratives are not simply converging measures of identity; narratives are constitutive of identity, in that how we make sense of our experiences and who we perceive ourselves to be are reciprocally related across development[li]. Life narratives are unique because they show the relationship between life events and the development of the storyteller's personality, including how the individual makes life decisions according to central values[lii]. A person's internalised and evolving life

story, integrates the reconstructed past and imagined future to provide life with some degree of unity and purpose[liii]. It is argued that human behaviour is guided by three internalised domains: psychological traits, personal strategies, and identity narratives or self-stories and though traits are relatively stable over the life course, the second two, more contextualised domains of personality leave open the possibility of substantial change in adulthood[liv]. A third level of personality is the internalised and evolving narrative that individuals construct to integrate their pasts, presents and perceived futures into a personal identity that sustains and guides behaviour[lv].

The McAdams Life Story Interview[lvi] is a methodological concept, which helps us to understand narrative identity. It is a tool that has been widely used in psychology that emphasizes narrative and the storied nature of human conduct. Narratives allow researchers to ethically and meaningfully understand lived experiences in context[lvii].

A narrative, qualitative methodology was suggested to be suited to the evaluation because it would provide a detailed analysis of the rich descriptions of individuals' experiences whilst they were participating in the GOFG project, whilst also understanding how their experience and the GOFG project fits with their life. The research therefore utilised narrative 'Life Story' approaches to explore participant's qualitative accounts of their journey.

2.11 Personal Networks and Social Capital – Social Network Analysis

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a methodology for exploring social relations, social structures and flows (e.g. resources, information) between people, groups or organisations. SNA approaches can be qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods. SNA methods have two main applications. They can be based on a whole network, for example a school or class, where the network has a defined boundary and all members of the network are known. Or a personal network approach, also known as an egonet study. This approach focuses on the structure, composition and shape of an individual's personal network and is usually constructed on the basis of a specific type of tie, for example friendship ties. [lviii]A study[lix] investigated how easy or difficult it was for respondents to generate data on social support networks, using visual or tabulating methods. This paper informed our network study design and the creation of a paper-based table format (Appendix Four) that could easily be used in busy and noisy environments by researchers and project mentors, described further in section 5.7.

SNA methods have been used extensively in the context of working with young people to explore a range of issues from school attainment[lx] [lxi] [lxii] smoking, alcohol and drug use[lxiii] [lxiv] [lxv] to youth transitions[lxvi] [lxvii].

SNA is increasingly used in the context of youth justice, criminology and gang research with recognition for the need to account for gendered experiences as well as gender-specific interventions. Several themes emerge from the literature in this area and include violence perpetrated by, and against, girls and young women[lxviii] [lxix] [lxx], and engagement in criminal activities and delinquency[lxxi] [lxxii] [lxxiii].

Social supports and network structures are reoccurring themes in the literature, and both can be conceptualised as a feature of social capital. Social capital is a useful and well theorised concept that helps us understand the mechanisms by which people are able to gain social advantages or the ways in which they are excluded from opportunities[lxxiv] [lxxv] [lxxvi]. Lin (2000: 786)[lxxvii] defines social capital as the 'investment and use of embedded resources in social relations for expected returns.' Network opportunities and constraints can play an important role in the lives of young people in crisis or navigating significant life events. There are several studies indicating the importance of family and non-family networks and support for young people[lxxviii] [lxxix] [lxxx]. Johnson et al. (2011) examine the relationship between depression and social support for a cohort of incarcerated youth.

They suggest that for criminal justice-involved youth it is important to understand the gender implications of knowing where young people seek support and the impact this might have on levels of depression. Their findings indicate overall, that the more girls and boys are supported by their siblings and extended family and the greater the satisfaction with the support, the less likely they were to experience depression. The report found little to no link between levels of parental and friend support with depression. However, they found that incarcerated girls reported a greater reliance on friendships and extended family than boys and higher reported levels of depression. Social support structures and other wellbeing measures, including anxiety, have been investigated by numerous studies[lxxxi lxxxiilxxxiii]

In light of the literature, a case-study based personal network approach to understanding the G&YW's social support structures adds another dimension to our qualitative understanding of the issues faced by participants.

2.11 Conclusion

Process evaluations can provide in-depth information about the functioning of interventions and systems, and pin-point areas where improvements might be made. The process is most useful when clear objectives have been developed for the evaluation and the intended users are involved at the planning stage (WHO, 2000). Phase one of the GOFG project was accompanied by a process evaluation of the intervention for this reason. The aims of the research were:

1. To undertake a process evaluation of the GOFG project.
2. To explore methodological options for any subsequent phases of evaluation.

The evaluation of GOFG seeks to gain understanding of the process and emerging outcomes of the GOFG project and also to develop the literature by providing an example of an evaluation in this field which (1) implements valid and theoretically sound outcome measures which measure areas of change the intervention seeks to facilitate, (2) specifically focuses on a secondary and targeted intervention in the community, (3) implements measures based on a theoretical understanding of the vulnerabilities of the cohort, (4) explores the narrative identity of participants and how GOFG fits with where each young person is at, (5) implements a quasi-empirical methodology of pre and post psychometric assessment comparison.

The following research questions were asked and addressed by the process evaluation:

1. What has been the participant's experience of the GOFG project?
2. Is the GOFG project demonstrating any evidence of impact?
3. How well is the intervention working and what improvements can be made?

3. GOFG Theory of Change (ToC)

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the ToC is to help to explain how activities are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impacts of the project. The ToC seeks to describe a pathway from the need that it is trying to address, to the changes that it seeks to make (outcomes). The ToC articulates the process of the GOFG project and also provides a basis for the evaluation. In addition to the planning and development benefits afforded by a ToC to GOFG, a ToC is useful for identifying the data which needs to be collected and how it should be analysed[lxxxiv]. Ultimately - with evidence against each element of the theory - it provides a framework to construct an evidence-based "story" about the GOFG project, its process and its outcomes.

A diagrammatic representation of the theory of change for the GOFG is shown in Figure 1. This narrative is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying diagrammatic representation of the ToC.

The project specifically targets G&YW who have been identified as being at risk of serious gang related youth violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and modern slavery. This is achieved by addressing the multiple systemic vulnerabilities that women and girls face, this includes: living in residential care; a history of abuse or neglect; experience of loss; low self-esteem; learning disabilities or poor mental health; living in a gang neighbourhood; or, lacking friends of the same age.

The G&YW who are referred to the project are given an intensive three-month programme of mentoring, advice and activities by the charity Positive Steps together with local sport, art and cultural providers. With a focus on boxing and football, supported by youth theatre and film-making, the G&YW help their peers to address pathways into and out of gang involvement, devising their own solutions through up-skilling and resilience building.

Through the established citywide links and multi-modal approach, GOFG aims to engage with G&YW in their locality to address their specific issues, while engaging them in positive sporting and cultural activities. Additionally, through a successful model of peer mentoring, identified G&YW are assigned an experienced peer mentor who will work with them to address issues specific to their needs.

3.2 Context

'I Define Me' is funded by Comic Relief as well as from the Tampon Tax Fund (through a partnership between HM Government and Comic Relief). Manchester Metropolitan University is one of the UK 'I Define Me' projects who are supporting gang affected young women. The MMU project is called 'Getting Out for Good'.

GOFG engages with G&YW (aged 14 – 24 years) at risk of gang involvement in the Greater Manchester area (project beneficiaries). G&YW are engaging with activities voluntarily. Each G&YW has been referred to one of MMU's delivery partners - Positive Steps because they have been identified as being at risk of serious gang related youth violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and modern slavery. These G&YW are offered the opportunity to engage with the GOFG project.

Positive Steps is a charitable trust that delivers a range of targeted and integrated services for young people, adults and families that recognises the diversity of the people with whom we work. Positive Steps deliver a combination of statutory, voluntary and traded services – funded through

local authority and charitable trust grants, charitable donations, contracts based on payment by results, and income generated through a sister company Positive Steps Trading – where all profits fund charitable activity.

3.3 Assumptions

The assumptions that show why GOFG thinks that one outcome will lead to another are firstly that young people are interested in available activities. GOFG includes a range of drama, sport and creative activities and G&YM also have the opportunity to access accredited awards for completing activities and it is assumed that these will be of interest to the G&YW to engage and motivate their active participation. This is the most critical assumption. It is also assumed that girl-specific, relationship-based intervention empowers girls. The activities and approach of GOFG seeks outcomes that engender individual agency, resilience and create legacy and in order to do so, empowerment is assumed to be essential and that the specific, relationship-based intervention approach and its creation of empowerment helps to achieve sought outcomes.

3.4 Evidence

The existing evidence is summarised in the introduction section of this report. In summary, GOFG is guided by a number of evidence sources, notably:

- the Firmin report[lxxxv] which highlights a series of issues facing young women and girls affected by gang-related violence. The report suggests these complex issues which include domestic violence, sexual violence, exploitation and modern slavery be viewed as child protection issues, and that local authorities develop a strategic and operational plan for responding to the impact of criminal gangs and serious youth violence on G&YW.
- Centre for Mental Health report "A Need to Belong: What Leads Girls to Join Gangs"[lxxxvi]
- Evidence from the UK Children's Commissioner.
- Identity and narrative identity theory and research.
- Various mentoring reports that highlight the benefits and pitfalls of mentoring young people in the criminal justice system, and also those deemed at risk of serious youth violence and gangs[lxxxvii lxxxviii lxxxix] were also considered.
- Sport as an intervention and desistance promoting tool.
- Evidence[xc] of the impact of youth theatre on young people's social and personal development.

3.5 Inputs

The resources (inputs) that go into GOFG are identified as including money with funding from Comic Relief. Time is another input from all involved agencies and partners, not only in the direct delivery of activities with young people but also in organisation, management and project steering, monitoring and recording and administration. Competent and motivated staff is another input. Premises, both formal and informal for intervention delivery and direct contact with young people are also essential identified inputs, together with additional office premises for delivery and management staff. Possibly the most important input to GOFG are its formal partner agencies who work in partnership with MMU in delivering GOFG: Mad Theatre Company; Collyhurst and Moston Amateur Boxing Club; The Averment Group; Sue Reddish; and, City in the Community.

3.6 Activities

Through the established citywide links and multi-modal approach GOFG engages with G&YW in their locality to address their specific issues, while engaging them in positive diversionary activities such as sport and drama. Approaches seek to build resilience in G&YW who are supported to resist harmful and risky gang situations and exit from gang related activity, while developing resilience

and positive identity formation to enable them to think independently, and thus reduce their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse. In order to do so, GOFG activities include:

- Peer mentoring
- Engaging young people in art and cultural activities
- Engaging young people in sport
- Festival of achievement

3.7 Preconditions

These internal and external factors are key to the success of GOFG. They need to exist for the GOFG theory of change to happen. They are considered to be:

1. Suitable referrals are made into project: if G&SW who fit GOFG referral criteria are not referred to the project they will not be able to take up the GOFG offer. Unsuitable referrals will inhibit the likelihood of GOFG achieving positive outcomes.

2. Young people's engagement: the engagement of young people who agree to participate in GOFG needs to be maintained through the duration of their planned intervention to maximise the likelihood of positive outcomes.

3. Project delivery partner's continuity: that delivery partner's offers are consistent through the lifespan of GOFG. If a project partner is unable to continue their offer, then this will inhibit GOFG activities and reduce the available GOFG offer to young people.

4. Stakeholder support of approach: all stakeholders, from young people, to operational delivery staff, management staff, delivery partners and strategic management together with wider stakeholders including young people's families and communities actively support the premise and approach of GOFG. If a stakeholder no longer supports GOFG then this may become an inhibitor of GOFG.

5. Responsive understanding of local and culturally specific issues in localities: it is critical that GOFG understands young people's localities in regard to ensuring a better understanding of the needs and context of each individual participant and also to ensure the appropriateness of delivered activities and their location. This understanding includes local issues, challenges, needs and events that can be gathered by regular communication and consultation with delivery partners and key stakeholders including G&YW participants. It is also essential to include culturally specific issues in this understanding to ensure responsiveness of delivery to each cohort.

6. Careful, appropriate delivery of mentoring approach: we know that the literature evaluating mentoring initiatives offers a mixed picture, particularly for preventing offending[xci]. In a crime reduction and prevention context we know that mentoring is more effective when applied as part of a programme of interventions, where meetings are at least once a week and five or more hours in duration with an emphasis on emotional support, and where the mentor is motivated by professional advancement[xcii]. In the context of child criminal and other exploitation, the available evidence regarding mentoring is more limited. The GOFG cohort have a range of vulnerabilities and need, particularly in relation to emotional health and wellbeing and recent meta-analysis of available models of peer support that support and improve children and young people's mental health provides insight into the potential benefits of different mentoring models such as increased happiness and wellbeing, improved self-esteem, confidence and emotional resilience, improved social skills and relationships and positive impact on the school environment. GOFG integrates the identified reasons for success include into preconditions of delivery: importance of the programme

being well run, with a clear focus, strong leadership by a co-ordinator and support; the value of co-production of schemes by the children or young people themselves; that more formalised projects tend to be more successful. The elements include: a structured process of monitoring and evaluation; having a dedicated space for peer support, with dedicated time slots; and formal training of peer supporters and co-ordinators.

The consensus that the success of projects depends on the quality of the peer supporters if also a precondition of GOFG; specifically, trained mentors who are enthusiastic, committed and reliable; with strong communication and interpersonal skills; and, in receipt of supervision and support.

3.8 Outcomes

Outcomes refer to the intended results of the GOFG activities. These are things that did not exist before the GOFG project but need to exist in order for the logical causal chain not to be broken and ultimately for the GOFG outcomes to be achieved.

- Young women and girls will have better health and wellbeing.
- Girls and young women will have improved social capital and have better control over their social networks.
- To raise the educational aspirations of girls and young women by providing age and level appropriate pathways and opportunities for learning.
- To facilitate girls and young women in creating a legacy for themselves and their communities through sport, arts and mentoring activities.
- To demonstrate greater resilience in girls and young women, improved self-confidence to make positive choices away from gangs by:
    - ✓ Getting physically fit.
    - ✓ Reinterpreting negative events.
    - ✓ Enhancing positive emotions.
    - ✓ Developing friendships and support networks.

3.9 Accountability line

There is an accountability line between outcomes that are achieved directly by the GOFG and longer-term goals to which these contribute.

3.10 End goal outcomes

The GOFG final (ultimate) end goal outcomes refer to real world change that the GOFG seeks to affect.

These are that: girls & young women are making active, positive contributions to their families, communities and societies; and, girls & young women who are gang affected are empowered to define their own lives and futures.

These end goal outcomes are above the 'accountability line', meaning the GOFG project can contribute: achieving these objectives is subject to several additional factors.

3.11 Impact

Ultimately, the GOFG project seeks to contribute towards the overarching impact aim of I Define Me - that G&YW experience less harm.

Figure Two:

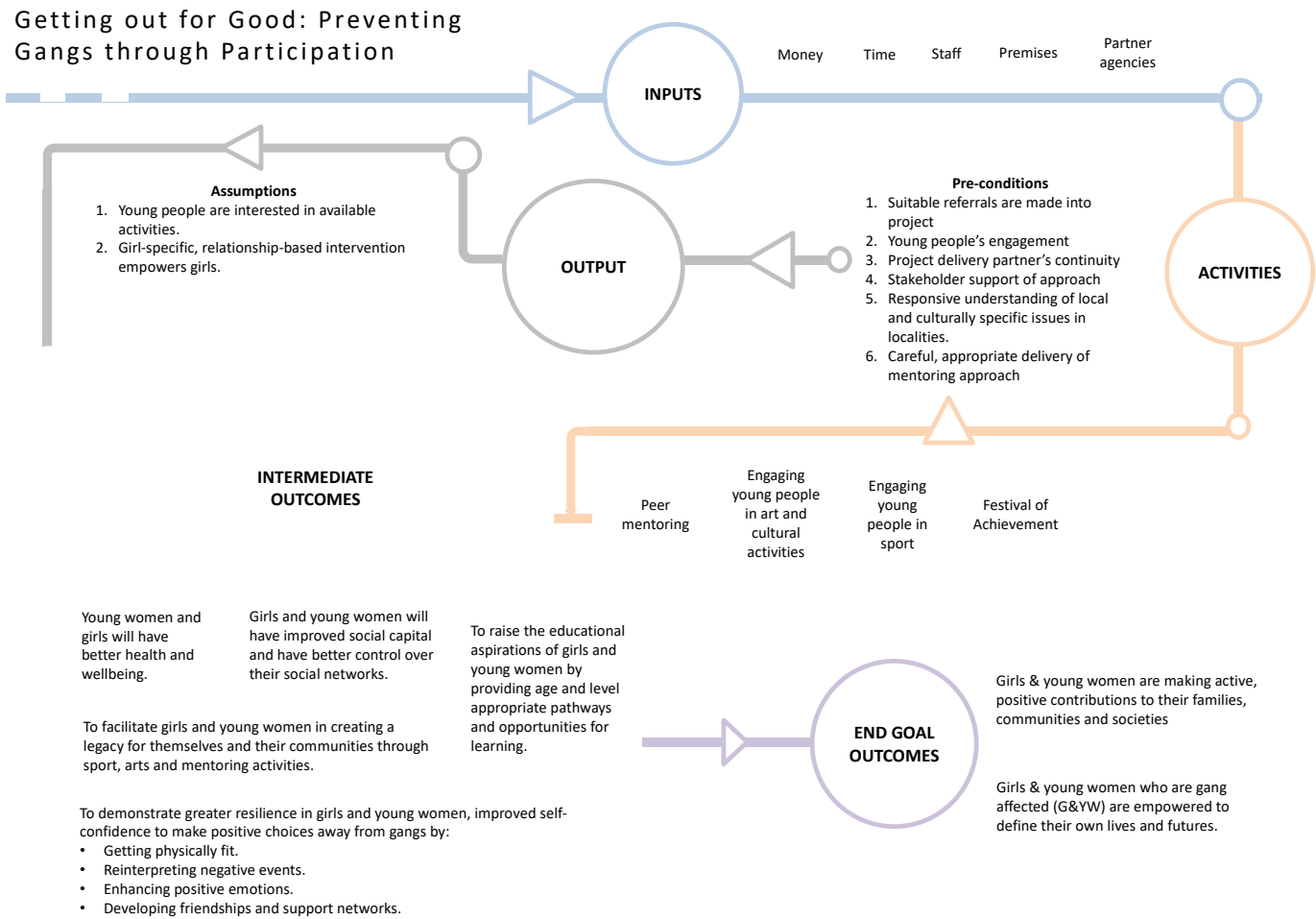

Getting out for Good: Preventing Gangs through Participation
INPUTS
Money
Time
Staff
Premises
Partner agencies
Assumptions
1. Young people are interested in available activities.
2. Girl-specific, relationship-based intervention empowers girls.
OUTPUT
Pre-conditions
1. Suitable referrals are made into project
2. Young people's engagement
3. Project delivery partner's continuity
4. Stakeholder support of approach
5. Responsive understanding of local and culturally specific issues in localities.
6. Careful, appropriate delivery of mentoring approach
ACTIVITIES
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
Peer mentoring
Engaging young people in art and cultural activities
Engaging young people in sport
Festival of Achievement
Young women and girls will have better health and wellbeing.
Girls and young women will have improved social capital and have better control over their social networks.
To raise the educational aspirations of girls and young women by providing age and level appropriate pathways and opportunities for learning.
To facilitate girls and young women in creating a legacy for themselves and their communities through sport, arts and mentoring activities.
To demonstrate greater resilience in girls and young women, improved self-confidence to make positive choices away from gangs by:
• Getting physically fit.
• Reinterpreting negative events.
• Enhancing positive emotions.
• Developing friendships and support networks.
END GOAL OUTCOMES
Girls & young women are making active, positive contributions to their families, communities and societies
Girls & young women who are gang affected (G&YW) are empowered to define their own lives and futures.

Table One: GOFG Theory of Change Logic Model

This is the logic model for the GOFG project. It is a hypothesis of how activities will lead to outcomes and the necessary steps in between, taking into account external factors and inherent assumptions. The evaluation will collect evidence to prove or disprove the various components of this theory.

Rational:
Evidence sources: research regarding gangs, gang related vulnerabilities and gang contexts for girls and young women together with identity, narratives and identity within narratives. The evidence base of intervention approaches.

Preconditions:

- Suitable referrals are made into project
- Young people's engagement
- Project delivery partner's continuity
- Stakeholder support of approach
- Responsive understanding of local and culturally specific issues in localities

Careful, appropriate delivery of mentoring approach

Inputs	Activities	Intermediate outcomes	Outcomes	Impact
Competent and motivated staff: • MMU strategic leadership, coordination and administration • Partner agency staff	Peer mentoring	Young women and girls will have better health and wellbeing.	Girls and young women are making active, positive contributions to their families, communities and societies.	Girls experience less harm
Partner agencies: • Mad Theatre Company • Collyhurst and Moston Amateur Boxing Club • The Averment Group • Sue Reddish • City in the Community	Engaging young people in art and cultural activities	Girls and young women will have improved social capital and have better control over their social networks.	Girls and young women who are gang affected are empowered to define their own lives and futures.	
Funding (Comic Relief)	Engaging young people in sport	To raise the educational aspirations of girls and young women by providing age and level appropriate pathways and opportunities for learning.		
Time: • Direct delivery of activities with G&YW	Festival of achievement	To facilitate girls and young women in creating a legacy for themselves and their		

• Organisation, management and project steering, monitoring and recording and administration		communities through sport, arts and mentoring activities.		
Premises: • Formal premises for intervention delivery and direct contact with G&YW • Informal premises and venues for contact with G&YW • Office premises for delivery and management staff		To demonstrate greater resilience in girls and young women, improved self-confidence to make positive choices away from gangs by: •Getting physically fit. •Reinterpreting negative events. •Enhancing positive emotions. •Developing friendships and support networks.		
Assumptions: • Young people are interested in available activities. • Girl-specific, relationship-based intervention empowers girls.				

External factors:

- Any changes to young people's circumstances during the programme (e.g. change of school, change of address, familial involvement with statutory services)
- Local and national political climate
- Legislative change
- Issues within partner agencies (e.g. budget cuts)
- Neighbourhood dynamics and events / community response

4. Method

4.1 Introduction

The process of the GOFG evaluation was as important as its outcome. Causal relations between actions and results are challenging to evidence.

Therefore, this initial and formative evaluation of the GOFG programme sought to correspond with GOFG early and initial first phase by exploring the implementation processes of GOFG, and to identify and understand how the GOFG programme functions. In order to do so, the methodology of the evaluation of GOFG utilised a 'Logical Framework Approach' (LFA) driven by the early formulation of the GOFG theory of change (ToC) (see Chapter 2) which provided an explicit account of how the proposed activities of GOFG would lead to the desired outcomes. The developed ToC essentially guided the evaluation approach by providing a systematic account of GOFG inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts (a causal pathway).

The LFA is a systematic, visual approach to designing, executing and assessing projects which encourages users to consider the relationships between available resources, planned activities, and desired changes or resultsxciii built from the ToC. The GOFG Logic Model is available in Chapter Two.

In order to plan for the measurement and evaluation of GOFG the TOC and Logic Model guided the development of a 'measurement framework' that what was necessary to collect to test whether the theory of change is delivered.

The GOFG Measurement Framework is detailed in Table Two.

Table Two: GOFG Measurement Framework

This is the logic model for the GOFG project. It is a hypothesis of how activities will lead to outcomes and the necessary steps in between, taking into account external factors and inherent assumptions. The evaluation will collect evidence to prove or disprove the various components of this theory.

Narrative Summary	Objectively Verifiable indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Activities: • Peer mentoring • Engaging young people in art and cultural activities • Engaging young people in sport • Festival of achievement	Number of young women engaged in GOFG Sport activities	Project throughput data Partner feedback and reflection	Young people are interested in available activities
	Number of young women engaged in GOFG arts activities	Project throughput data Partner feedback and reflection	
	Number of young women engaged in GOFG mentoring activities	Project throughput data Partner feedback and reflection	
	Number of G&YW completing AQA assessments	Project throughput data Partner feedback and reflection	
Intermediate Outcomes: • Young women and girls will have better health and wellbeing • Girls and young women will have improved social capital and have better control over their social networks • To raise the educational aspirations of girls and young women by providing age and level appropriate pathways and opportunities for learning • To facilitate girls and young women in creating a legacy for themselves and their communities through sport, arts and mentoring activities • To demonstrate greater resilience in girls and young women, improved self-confidence to make positive choices away from gangs by: ✓ Getting physically fit ✓ Reinterpreting negative events ✓ Enhancing positive emotions ✓ Developing friendships and support networks	Average total score - Satisfaction with Life Scale	Completed Satisfaction with Life assessments at T1 and T2	Girl-specific, relationship-based intervention empowers girls
	Average total score - SWEMWBS	Completed SWEMWBS assessments at T1 and T2	
	Average total score - SDQ Total Difficulties	Completed SDQ assessments at T1 and T2	
	Average score - Emotional / Informational Support Subscale (MOS Social Support Survey Instrument)	Completed MOSSSSI assessments at T1 and T2	
	Average Score - Emotional Support Score (Norbeck Social Support Scale)	Completed SNA interview T1 and T2	

End Goal Outcomes: • Girls & young women are making active, positive contributions to their families, communities and societies • Girls & young women who are gang affected (G&YW) are empowered to define their own lives and futures	Levels of participation in Festival of Achievement	Observation KETSO Feedback	Girl-specific, relationship-based intervention empowers girls

4.2 Introduction

In order to capture the complexity of the GOFG activities and its sought outcomes a mixed methods evaluation was undertaken comprising a number of components. The evaluation approach was flexible and included the use of both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative methods sought to include the exploration of descriptive, narrative and context-specific details which were considered critical to provide a foundation for understanding the environment and context in which GOFG activities took place. The evaluation's qualitative methods comprised of narrative life story interviews, observations and field note records, and focus group sessions at specific time points. Ketso[2] was used to facilitate the focus group, and canvass the G&YW opinions around specific issues relating to the intermediate and end goal outcomes. These focus groups were held at three time points (T1/T2/T3) for each cohort.

A small case-based mixed-methods social network study was carried out involving participants from cohort three and four. This involved conducting a personal network interview with eleven participants to assess their support networks at the beginning of their involvement with the programme. There were six successful follow up interviews with participants at the end of their involvement with the project.

Quantitative methods included psychometric assessment completion at the start and conclusion of young people's involvement with GOFG. Project throughput data was also collected and analysed.

4.3 Qualitative methods

4.3.1 Life Story Interviews

It was important to the evaluation approach to recognise each individual participating in GOFG and their varied backgrounds, histories, needs and stories. The evaluation did not want to include any 'one size fits all' and generalised measures to explore participant's experiences of GOFG. The evaluation of complex interventions that seek to effect individual change across a variety of needs is complex. Therefore, the psychologically informed evaluation approach looked towards narrative identity theory; a person's internalized and evolving life story, integrating the reconstructed past and imagined future to provide life with some degree of unity and purpose[xciv]. McAdams' three levels of narrative identity[xcv] include traits, characteristic adaptations, and the life story. More recently, McAdams (2015) has argued that these three levels can be understood as increasingly sophisticated layers of development, subsumed under the metaphors of actor, motivated agent, and author.

The McAdams Life Story Interview[xcvi] is a methodological concept, which helps us to understand narrative identity. It is a tool that has been widely used in psychology and the social sciences that emphasises narrative and the storied nature of human conduct. It enables the exploration of the McAdams (1994)[xcvii] third level of personality – the internalised and evolving narrative.

The evaluation therefore utilised a narrative 'Life Story' interview approach to explore GOFG participant's qualitative accounts. This is a new approach, formulated to explore the internalised and evolving narrative of each GOFG participant and where their GOFG experience sits within this narrative. In other words, does the GOFG respond to each individual and have any impact upon their internalised and evolving narrative? Interviews thus aimed to explore where each participant is

[2] https://ketso.com

in their life, their hopes, dreams, aspirations and current progress and then explores where the GOFG project fits in with that and how the participant is experiencing the project.

The McAdams Life Story Interview[xcviii] was reviewed and adapted for the purpose of evaluation. The amended protocol is available in Appendix Two.

A total of 8 GOFG participants were interviewed at various points through phase one of GOFG. A total of 2 young people was opportunistically sampled from each of the 4 cohorts. Mentors were asked by the researcher to nominate participants and once agreement was given, arrangements were made to meet with the young person either in person, or if preferred by the young person, a phone call was arranged.

Interview length ranged between 15-60 minutes. Interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically.

Narrative data raise unique ethical issues[xcix]. The reporting of personal narratives can be a taxing, emotional experience, particularly for certain types of events (e.g., low points, traumas, transgressions). The consent, data collection, and debriefing procedures of the research were organised accordingly. The task was clearly defined before consent, and regular check ins were completed with participants during data collection. We were prepared to make referrals during debriefing. The interview began by explaining that a protocol was to be used that the researcher needed to adhere to, but that the researcher would strive to make the interview feel as conversational as possible[c]. The researcher also strove to elicit responses to each part of the prompt.

All participants signed a participation agreement form. All participants were briefed about the study and informed of their right to withdraw participation or data at any time. Participants were advised of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. All participants signed an informed consent form prior to their participation with clear information as to the purpose and nature of the research. Whilst the details of participants' lives are reported, every effort was made to exclude details which would enable them to be identified. One refusal to participate in this element of the research was made.

4.3.1.1 Participants

Participants of Life Story interviews were aged between 14 and 21 years, all were participating, or had participated and successfully completed GOFG.

The following table presents the parameters of the service user research participants.

Table three: Life Story Interview Participants

	Age	Gender
Participant 1	16	Female
Participant 2	16	Female
Participant 3	14	Female
Participant 4	15	Female
Participant 5	14	Female
Participant 6	16	Female
Participant 7	15	Female
Participant 8	21	Female

4.4 Partner feedback and reflection

Feedback and reflection was sought from all GOFG delivery partners. Partners were asked to consider and reflect on the following topics and to return their feedback in an email format:

1. What has worked well
2. Challenges
3. How the young people have experienced / feedback about your input
4. How you experienced delivery – did it go as planned?

4.5 Ketso work groups.

Ketso is a flexible qualitative toolkit for effective thinking, discussion, and collaboration. It can be used to facilitate small and large groups around any key issues set by the researcher. GOFG used Ketso to facilitate group discussion around key themes that mapped directly onto the five outcomes. We used this tool with each of the five cohorts over three time points (taster session/2-3 months later/celebration event). Below is a list of the themes we discussed at each time point.

Time one:

Theme 1- What are you good at?

We wanted to gauge young people's aspirations and get a sense of where they were at with positive ideas of self and identity. On average most young people reported being good at:

1. Various sports
2. Arts
3. Supporting friends and family
4. Sleeping
5. Eating
6. Cooking

Theme 2- If you could do anything in the world what would it be?

Sticking with the theme of aspiration, we wanted to understand young people's position in the world and expectation of themselves & others. On average most young people reported:

1. Travel
2. Earn money
3. Be famous
4. Help others (family members/homeless/children/cure diseases)

Theme 3- What kind of things worry you?

We wanted to unpack the worries that young people face and try to understand how the project could help at a group level and to seem similarities and differences. On average most young people reported:

1. Harm and bereavement of family/loved ones/friends
2. Homelessness
3. Poverty
4. Bullying
5. Not having control over life & institutions- relapse/social services/school/police

Theme 4 – What makes you feel safe or better?

We wanted to explore coping mechanisms for young people and resilience. On average most young people reported:

1. Trusted adults (parents/carers/mentors)
2. Friends
3. Music

4. Home

Theme 5- What do you want from the project?
We wanted to assess the young people's expectations of the project and how we could manage that? On average most young people reported:

1. Meet new friends
2. Engage in activities (Sports/art)
3. Stay out of trouble
4. Confidence
5. Be fitter & healthier

Time Two (Usually done 3 months later)
Theme 1- If you had a million pounds to spend where you live what would you spend it on?
We try to understand young people's relationship to their community and social capital. On average most young people reported:

1. More things to do- leisure activities
2. More parks and facilities
3. More shops
4. Bigger houses
5. Less poverty

Theme 2- What does it take to feel in control of your life and your future?
We wanted to explore young people's networks as well aspirations and resilience. We also wanted to gauge as sense of young people's agency. On average most young people reported

1. Friends and Family
2. Money
3. Support around you
4. Jobs
5. Qualifications
6. Confidence/Self belief
7. Respect

Theme 3- What needs to change in your family/community for girls to fulfil their dreams?
We wanted to explore barriers and change mechanisms alongside aspirations and access to social capital. On average most young people reported

1. Education (GCSE's/going back to school)
2. More institutional support
3. Improvements in mental health and more positive attitudes
4. More opportunities
5. Less negative parental interference/influence

Theme 4- What needs to change in your community for violence to be reduced
We wanted to explore how much violence the young people were exposed to and what their thoughts on this were. How did this effect their lives and communities in the day to day. On average most young people reported

1. More police
2. Less drugs
3. More youth clubs
4. Build communities

T3 ***Celebration event Ketso
This was a group evaluation of the project over the past 3 months

Theme 1- what was your favourite activity and why?
This theme allowed us to gain a perspective on what element of the project the G&YW enjoyed the most. On average most young people reported

1. Meeting people
2. Boxing
3. Confidence building
4. Filmmaking
5. Drama
6. Helping anger

Theme 2- If you could change anything about the project, what would it be?
This theme allowed the young people to give feedback on elements they wished to change. On average most young people reported

1. More time on project
2. More time on filmmaking in particular
3. Most young people reported feeling happy with the design of the project

Theme 3- general discussion around school and push and pull factors surrounding education.
We designed this theme to allow young people to give their views one education and whether the AQA's were in any way a pull factor. On average most young people reported

1. High expectations of grades were a worry
2. Self- sabotage was a worry
3. Finances and independence were a worry
4. Trusted adults were seen as a help to achieve success
5. Friends were seen as a help to achieve success
6. Work was seen as the main route, followed closely by college (mainly law& caring professions)
7. The project did not change their opinion of education

4.6 Social Networks, Social Support and Social Capital Measures

The SNA study uses a mixed-methods approach to generating personal network data and identifying the structure of G&YW's support networks. A paper-based quantitative data gathering tool was designed by adapting a tested social support scale and adding questions derived from the literature review. Despite the quantitative data collection strategy, the contextual interpretation of the results is primarily qualitative and compliment the life stories and Ketso-based group work discussions. The following section documents the SNA data collection design and application.

4.6.1 Norbeck Social Support Scale used with a Social Network Analysis (SNA) Tool

Personal network case studies were carried out with participants across two cohorts of the project. The case studies were each focused on a young person and their perception of all the social support ties they have available to them through their connections to other people. Social support networks are a feature of social capital and their quality and diversity can be an indicator of well-being and independence[ci]. Carrying out a network study can be burdensome on the participants when answering questions on alter-to-alter relationship ties so it is important to make the questionnaires as short and as easy to use as possible, whilst still maintaining content validity. Additionally, young people, often with chaotic lives, can be difficult to engage outside of already scheduled events, therefore, it is important to work with them when opportunities arise.

A paper-based SNA tool was designed based on a study[cii] which also employed the Norbeck Social **Support** Scale[ciii]. The psychometrically tested and widely used Norbeck Social Support Scale

assesses two different types of social support, emotional support and practical support. Taken together, both types of support generate an overall functional support score. The Norbeck Scale uses an additional two questions on frequency of contact and loss of contact but they are coded and analysed separately to the total functional support measures we are interested in. These additional questions were not included as it is unlikely that they would have made a significant contribution to our understanding of the social support seeking behaviour of our participants, and would have added an extra response burden. The Norbeck Scale for total functional support remains valid without them.

Using the name generator[civ] eleven participants from two cohorts were asked about their support networks before joining the project and six of that eleven were asked the same questions again towards the end of their time on the programme. A name generator is a common method for eliciting personal network data[cv cvi cvii]. First, participants were asked to nominate up to a maximum of 20 people they considered important to them, or who had an important role in their life. This number was chosen as an upper limit for network nominations rather than having a free response number as a way to contain nominations to a manageable level, but also to allow space for those with wider social circles or involvement in other activities or groups to include a broader selection of alters. It was anticipated that most participants would nominate far fewer alters than the upper limit, and this was the case.

Some personal network interviews were carried out in one-to-one meetings with researchers at dedicated times, and others were administered when the opportunity arose at group events by both researchers and mentors. Mentors were coached in advance in how to use the paper-based network tool. In order to protect the anonymity of participants and members of their networks, ID codes were used for each case study and nick names or initials were used to record members of their support network. This was further anonymised by using a numerical ID system when paper data was transferred to the electronic database.

The SNA and Life Story interviews used a case-based approach with different G&YW to broaden the scope of data collection across the project. Additionally, this avoided burdening any one participant with too many research interventions. However, both methods, along with the Ketso tool, are complimentary and some network related themes around support and negative peer networks were also evident in the life story narratives and focus group discussions.

4.7 Quantitative methods

4.7.1 Psychometric Test Battery

3·

4.7.1.2 Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaires

The Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief emotional and behavioural screening questionnaire for children and young people. It is a standardised questionnaire that has good psychometric properties[cviii] and is widely used with community, LAC and other clinical and non-clinical child and adolescent populations. The tool can capture the perspective of children and young people, their parents and teachers. It is suitable for use with children and young people aged 11-17 years.

GOFG mentors gave young people a SDQ questionnaire to complete at the start and the end of their involvement with GOFG. Respondents completed the SDQ themselves and returned it to their GOFG mentor. For the purpose of the research, SDQs were anonymised and returned to the evaluation team. A total of 4 completed SDQs were excluded because of the young person's age.

Responses on the SDQ were analysed and a total difficulties score was calculated for each SDQ as well as individual scores for conduct problems, emotional health, peer problems, hyperactivity and pro-social behaviour. SDQ scores could be calculated from the ratings of X of the X participants.

For the purpose of the evaluation, descriptive analysis was undertaken to explore the presenting needs of the GOFG cohort and to compare baseline SDQ assessment scores to follow-up SDQ assessments. Comparisons are made to national average SDQ scores for 11-15 year olds, available at www.sdqinfo.org.

4.7.1.3 Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

The SWLS is a short 5-item instrument designed to measure global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life[cix].

At time one, total scores could be calculated from the ratings of 23 of the 63 participants.

4.7.1.4 The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale

The SWEMWBS is a short version of the Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)[cx]. The WEMWBS was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. The SWEMWBS uses seven of the WEMWBS's 14 statements about thoughts and feelings. The seven statements are positively worded with five response categories from 'none of the time' to 'all of the time'. Children and young people are asked to describe their experiences over the past two weeks.

The SWEMWBS is a shortened version of the WEMWBS which is Rasch compatible which means that the 7 items included have undergone a more rigorous test for internal consistency than the WEMWBS. The seven items included in the SWEMWBS relate more to functioning than feelings and so offer a slightly different perspective on mental well-being[cxi].

At time one, total scores could be calculated from the ratings of 21 of the 63 participants.

4.7.1.5 MOS Social Support Survey Instrument (MOS SSI)

This is a brief and widely used survey that aims to assess the extent to which the person has the support of others to face stressful situations. Although developed to be applied to chronic patients, its use has been extended to include different populations due to its ease of application. The evaluation utilised the Emotional/informational support subscale.

Data collection approaches are summarised in Table 2.

All participants signed a participation agreement form. All participants were briefed about the study and informed of their right to withdraw participation or data at any time. Participants were advised of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. All participants signed an informed consent form prior to their participation with clear information as to the purpose and nature of the research. Whilst the details of participants' lives are reported, every effort was made to exclude details which would enable them to be identified. All participants gave their consent to participate in this element of the research.

Participants completed their SDQ assessments in initial 1:1 session with their mentors and in an individual 1:1 session with their mentor at conclusion points of their involvement with GOFG. Mentors returned the completed assessments to the research team.

Participants completed the MOSS SSI, SWEMWBS and SWLS at initial taster sessions for each cohort. Participants were given the assessments to complete individually on the day to return to the researchers before leaving for the day. Participants completed repeat final assessments during final group session events. Again, participants were given the assessments to complete individually on the day to return to the researchers before leaving for the day.

At time one, total scores could be calculated from the ratings of 24 of the 63 participants.

4.8 Project Throughput Data

The evaluation collected GOFG throughput data to explore planned and delivered cohorts and activities, take-up and attrition.

Throughput data was collected by GOFG delivery staff via project referral forms (see Appendix 3) and also via update to the MMU GOFG coordinators. Updates included: session frequency; attendance at activities; drop-outs; engagement; and, feedback. This was logged on a centralised and anonymised data matrix. Data from referral forms and received recorded throughput data was descriptively analysed and is presented in this report.

4.9 Limitations of this evaluation

The scope of the process evaluation was to explore the first phase of GOFG and its barriers and enablers. GOFG is a new partnership and intervention approach and its first phase operated for some 18 months. This inevitably limits the scope of the evaluation and the likelihood of longer term outcomes being achieved in this timeframe.

First and foremost, this is a process evaluation and is an exploratory analysis of GOFG and its likely utility. Its findings do not provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of GOFG. The findings provide indications of it likely impact during its first phase and it's likely rather than actual, future utility.

There were limitations in the sample size used within the analysis of psychometric assessment data. For this reason, only basic statistical analysis was undertaken, along with non-parametric analysis and descriptive analysis. Control groups were not accessible for the evaluation to enable any statistical comparison.

It was anticipated that the follow-up version of the SDQ which includes two additional follow-up questions for use after an intervention would be completed at times two and three. However, impact versions were completed at times 2 and 3.

Many assessments were part completed by G&YW. Whilst every effort was made during data collection to ensure that all G&YW responded to all questions within a measure, inevitably some questions were missed which has led to some missing data.

It was hoped that Life Story interviews could be undertaken at the start and end of a G&YW's involvement with GOFG however, it proved difficult to access G&YW to undertake Life Story interviews and as a result, one Life Story interview was completed with each participant. There were numerous arranged meetings with G&YW that were missed by the G&YW. Recruitment of participants became easier as time progressed, especially once Positive Steps began delivery of the mentoring programme. The modality of Life Story interviews was also varied to improve participation and a number of G&YW undertook interviews by telephone rather than in-person.

As a result, some of the Life Story interviews were conducted face-to-face and some were conducted over the telephone; it is possible that these differing forms of engagement may have affected the participant's responses.

The social network data was collected on a small number of participants with six providing network data at two timepoints. Whilst this was a case-based approach, having a full range of T1 and T2 network data for each of the eleven participants (or more) would have been preferable. SNA data collection is time consuming and can put a burden on the participant to recall, nominate and evaluate their network ties. Much of the missing data was a result of participants not attending the final group session. In addition, it is possible that because both researchers and mentors collected network data there may have been response differences. It is possible that participants may not have nominated mentors as a source of social support if interviewed by them.

Some of the throughput data lacks rigour. This was as a result of switching mentoring partners at the end of year one. Due to the lack of referrals from the original partner, we broadened our referral criteria and scope, accordingly, we changed data management systems. This change in data management resulted in an overhaul of our assessment tools and management systems. Therefore, cohort one did not receive the same assessment criteria as cohorts 2/3/4. This prevented us from having a clear trajectory, and subsequently the throughput data is not as rigorous or detailed as we would have liked.

It was anticipated that partners and delivery staff would contribute to the evaluation by providing reflections of their contributions and their views as to the mechanisms and process of the GOFG project and its early impacts. However, many partners did not respond to the request to participate in the evaluation despite repeated attempts and flexibility in feedback mechanisms and medium.

In conclusion:

1. We cannot make recommendations as to whether GOFG is better than another, similar intervention programme for this cohort of G&YW: It is not within the scope of this evaluation to give a definitive answer as to whether GOFG is better or worse than an alternative approach. A longitudinal, controlled study would be needed, where data for a proportionate sample of outcomes was available to evaluators from both the GOFG programme and a suitable control/comparison group.
2. We cannot make assumptions as to the views of participants, staff, and partners who have not participated in our evidence collection.
3. The sample size of the present study is much too small to be considered anything but an initial, exploratory and formative evaluation which must be expanded upon if the GOFG programme continues.

Table four: Data collection Approaches

Framework	Outcomes	Measures
Improving outcomes for young people and their families	1. Young women and girls will have better health and wellbeing. 2. Girls and young women will have improved social capital and have better control over their social networks. 3. To raise the educational aspirations of girls and young women by providing age and level appropriate pathways and opportunities for learning. 4. To facilitate girls and young women in creating a legacy for themselves and their communities through sport, arts and mentoring activities. 5. To demonstrate greater resilience in girls and young women, improved self-confidence to make positive choices away from gangs by: - Getting physically fit. - Reinterpreting negative events. - Enhancing positive emotions. - Developing friendships and support networks.	• Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (Youth in Mind, 2018) • Satisfaction with Life Scale (Kobau et al. (2010) • The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (Warwick Medical School, 2015) • MOS Social Support Survey Instrument, (Sherbourne & Stewart (1991) • Social Network Analysis tool adapted from Lippe and Gamper (2017) and the Norbeck Social Support Scale (1981) with 1995 scoring criteria Life Story Case Study Interviews to explore participant is in their life, their hopes, dreams, aspirations and current progress and then explores where the GOFG project fits in with that and how the participant is experiencing the project. Project throughput data. Ketso focus groups.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the evaluation. Due to sample sizes, a descriptive analysis was undertaken on psychometric test data. The qualitative data sources: Life Story Interviews; and, Ketso groups were analysed thematically. The mixed-methods case-based personal networks study was analysed contextually.

5.2 Throughput Data

The following section summarises the parameters of the young people engaged in GOFG during phase one and also the dosage of delivery across the cohorts. Data is available for 55 of the 63 cases.

Table Five: GOFG Young People Ages

Cohort	Age (Years)								
	13	14	15	16	17	18	21	25	Average
1	1	3	4	3	3				15.29
2		1	4	4	3				15.61
3			6	3	3			1	16.46
4		4	4	2	3	2	1		16.13

Table Six: GOFG Cohort Looked After Child (LAC) Status

Cohort	LAC		% LAC
	Yes	No	
1	3	11	**21**
2		12	**0**
3		13	**0**
4	3	13	**19**

Table Seven: GOFG Cohort Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

Cohort	EHCP		% EHCP
	Yes	No	
1	4	10	**29**
2	1	11	**8**
3	2	11	**15**
4	6	10	**38**

Table Eight: GOFG Cohort Involvement with Youth Offending Services (YOS)

Cohort	YOS Involvement		% YOS Involvement
	Yes	No	
1	3	11	**21**
2	0	12	**0**
3	0	13	**0**
4	3	13	**19**

Table Nine: GOFG Cohort Teenage Pregnancy

Cohort	TP		% TP
	Yes	No	
1	0	14	**0**
2	0	12	**0**
3	0	13	**0**
4	1	15	**6**

There was one young person in cohort 3 with a missing from home episode and another young person in cohort 4 with 3 missing from home episodes.

5.3 AQA Awards

AQA is a nationally recognised awarding body that develops and accredits vocational, sporting and cultural activities, as well as more formalised accreditations as GCSE and A-Level. AQA is commonly used in youth work, criminal justice settings, disability services and non-traditional educational settings such as Pupil Referral Units (PRU's). GOFG tailored four accreditations to the programme, spanning the activities of boxing, football, drama, and film-making. Additional awards were considered for mentoring and advanced film-making yet these were difficult to achieve due to time constraints.

A total of 200 AQA accreditations were awarded across the project's life span of three years. We accredited close to 63 participants with 4 awards each. These were usually achieved at the taster sessions and spanned the four activities on the day. Some young people chose not to participate in some of the activities, therefore not every participant achieved the full suite of awards and activities. Other awards were achieved in the group sessions and the weekly activities on offer. The dosage of these sessions is highlighted below.

Table Ten: GOFG Cohort Dosage

Cohort	Total G&YW	Total Taster/ Celebration sessions	Total Assessment sessions	Total Group Sessions	Total Phone - Parent	Total - Phone G&YW	Total 1:1 Contacts	Total Contacts with Other Professionals	Total Intervention – Client /Parent /Carer	Total Intervention- Client ONLY	Total Intervention- Carer Only	Total - Visited the Centre	Total	Average Dosage (all sessions)
1	14	18	14	16									**48**	**3.42**
2	12	17	18	128	5	19	53	67	2	17	5	11	**342**	**28.5**
3	13	10	6	45	0	8	26	18	0	3	3	0	**119**	**9.2**
4	16	8	7	25	0	29	32	10	1	16	3	10	**141**	**8.81**
Total	**55**	**53**	**45**	**214**	**5**	**56**	**111**	**95**	**3**	**36**	**11**	**21**	**650**	**11.8**

5.3 SDQs

The following section summarises SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) assessments. It was anticipated that all young people engaged in the GOFG project would complete an SDQ assessment at the start and end points of their involvement with GOFG. It was also anticipated that the final GOFG cohort (cohort 4) would complete an SDQ assessment at mid-point of their involvement with GOFG.

Pre- and post-treatment assessment measure means and standard errors for each subscale of the SDQ are listed in the tables below, together with the range of possible scores and clinically significant range for each subscale.

5.3.1 Young people's scores compared to national averages at time one

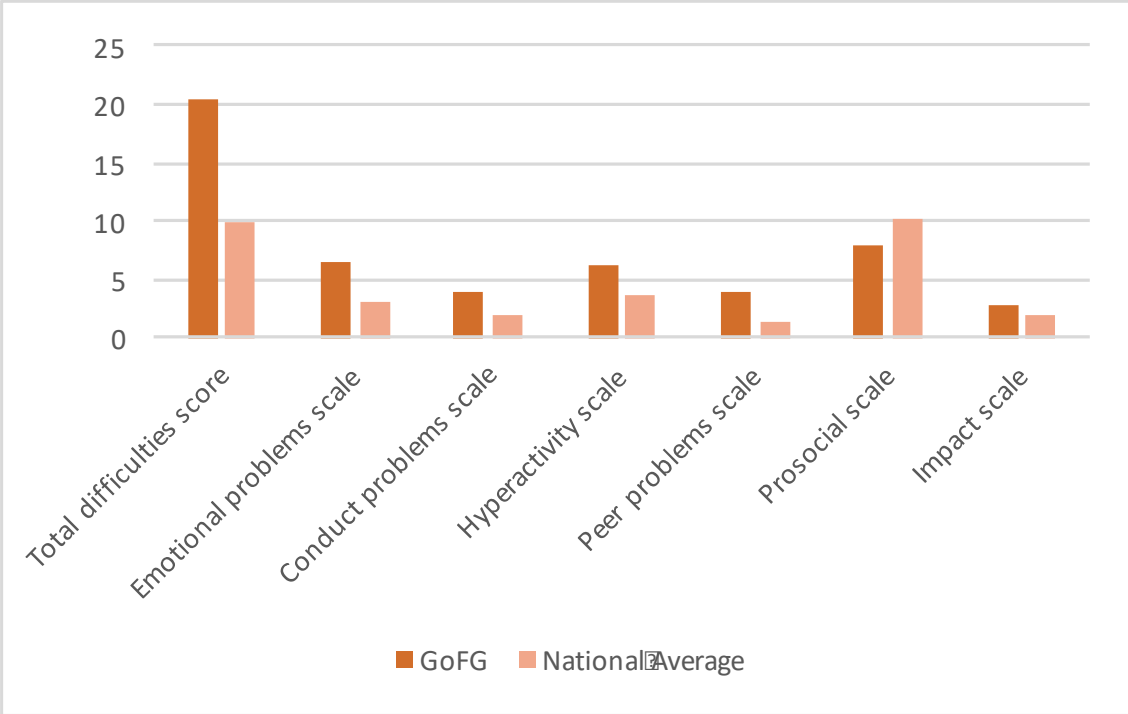
Table four shows average scores for young people on the individual subscales of the SDQ. These are shown for the GOFG cohort next to national average young people scores. National averages relate to female young people aged 11-15 years. The GOFG sample size is too small to enable statistical comparison, however, presented results allow descriptive comparison.

Table Eleven: GOFG Young People SDQ Time One Mean Scores Compared to National Average Scores

SDQ Subscales	Possible range	Clinically significant range	GOFG			National Average	
			N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Emotional problems scale	0-10	³6	29	6.45	2.08	3	2.1
Conduct problems scale	0-10	³5	36	3.86	1.57	2	1.6
Hyperactivity scale	0-10	³7	36	6.08	1.50	3.6	2.2
Peer problems scale	0-10	³4	36	3.92	1.56	1.4	1.4
Prosocial scale	0-40	≤5	36	7.86	1.87	8.5	1.4
Total difficulties score	0-10	³18	27	20.56	4.22	10	5.3
Impact	0-10	³2	14	2.80	1.96	2.36	1.51

The table shows mean scores for young people on the individual subscales of the SDQ. These are shown for the GOFG cohort next to national mean (average) young people scores. National British means relate to girls aged 11-15 years[cxii]. This data is also displayed in the following graph.

Graph One: GOFG Young People SDQ Time one Mean Scores Compared to National Average Scores



The data indicate that all SDQ subscales: the emotional problems; conduct problems; hyperactivity; and, peer problems along with the total difficulties and impact scale all have mean scores at time one for the GOFG cohort that are higher than the national average scores. The GOFG cohort average pro-social score appears lower than the national average score. However, with small sample sizes we cannot say whether this is statistically significant. It can be suggested that the GOFG cohort are beginning their involvement with the project with a high level of presenting need.

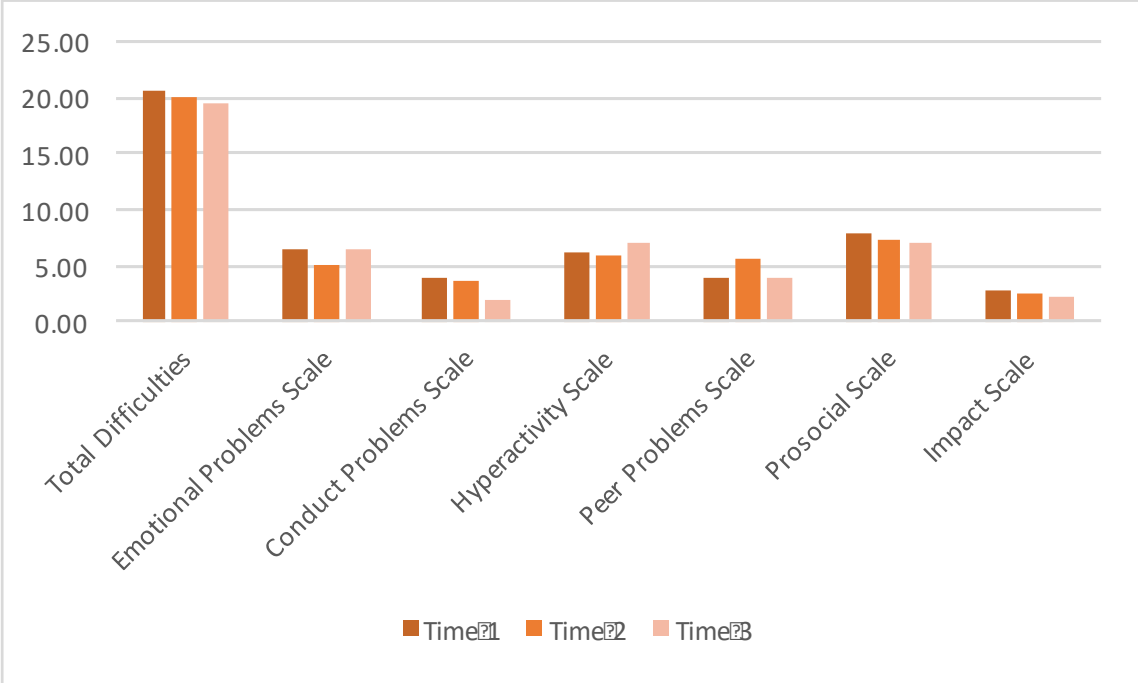
5.3.2 Young people's scores over time

Table Twelve: GOFG Young People SDQ Mean Scores

SDQ Subscales	Time One			Time Two			Time Three		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Emotional problems scale	29	6.45	2.08	15	5.20	2.21	2	6.50	3.54
Conduct problems scale	36	3.86	1.57	15	3.60	1.06	2	2.00	1.41
Hyperactivity scale	36	6.08	1.50	15	5.87	1.64	2	7.00	1.41
Peer problems scale	36	3.92	1.56	14	5.64	1.34	2	4.00	1.47
Prosocial scale	36	7.86	1.87	15	7.33	1.84	2	7.00	2.83
Total difficulties score	27	20.56	4.22	14	20.87	3.20	2	19.50	7.78
Impact	14	2.80	1.96	14	3.55	1.52	3	2.33	1.15

The above data is displayed in graph two.

Graph Two: GOFG Young People SDQ Mean Scores Over Time



It is very difficult to draw conclusions from the data because the sample size at time three is so small (n=2). Some patterns can be observed:

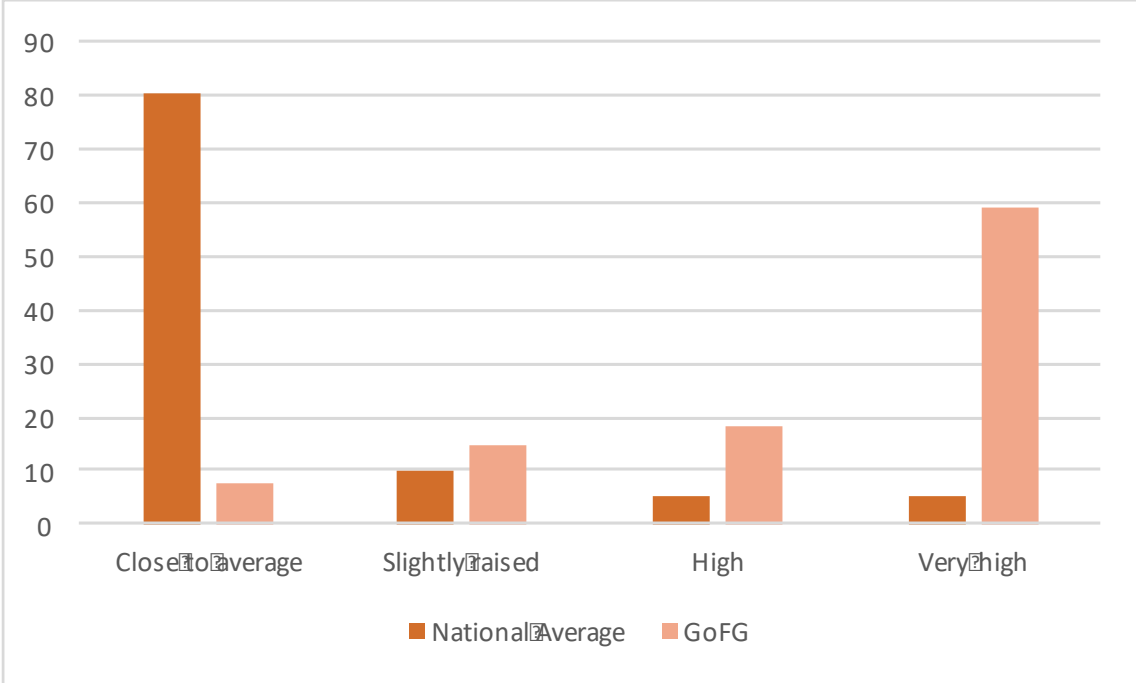
- The mean total difficulty score decreases over time; time one to time two and again at time three.
- There are a number of variations amongst the subscales.
- The conduct problems and impact scale means indicate improvements from time one, to time two and onwards to time three. The time three conduct problem scale mean indicates high need.
- The emotional problem scale mean reduces when comparing times one and time two, but increases at time three to slightly higher than time one. The hyperactivity scale mean follows a similar trend. Both time three means indicate high need.
- The peer problem scale mean increases from time one to time two before reducing again at time three, however the time three average is slightly higher than time one. The average score at time three indicates some need.

- The Pro-social scale mean is scored so that an absence of pro-social behaviour scores low. The GOFG cohort means reduce from time one, to time two and time three.

5.4 Young people's SDQ Classifications

GOFG SDQ scores were compared to national averages using published cut scores[cxiiicxiv]. A summary of total difficulty scores, as recorded by young people at time one, versus national averages for the SDQ, are presented in graph 2. This highlights that some 78 percent of the GOFG cohort presented with substantial difficulties and needs (classified as 'high' and 'very high'). This is compared to a national average 10 percent of a sample with substantial difficulties and needs.

Graph Three: GOFG Young People SDQ Time One Cut Scores Compared to National Average Scores



At time one, the mean SDQ total score of 20.56 sits within the 'very high' category. At time three, the mean SDQ total score reduces to 19.5 which moves the average down a category to 'high'.

It is important to note that whilst SDQ scores can be used as continuous variables and it is convenient to categorise scores, categorisation systems only provide a rough-and-ready way of screening for disorders. Combining information from SDQ symptom and impact scores from multiple informants is better, but still far from perfect[cxv].

5.5 SDQ Scores by GOFG Cohorts

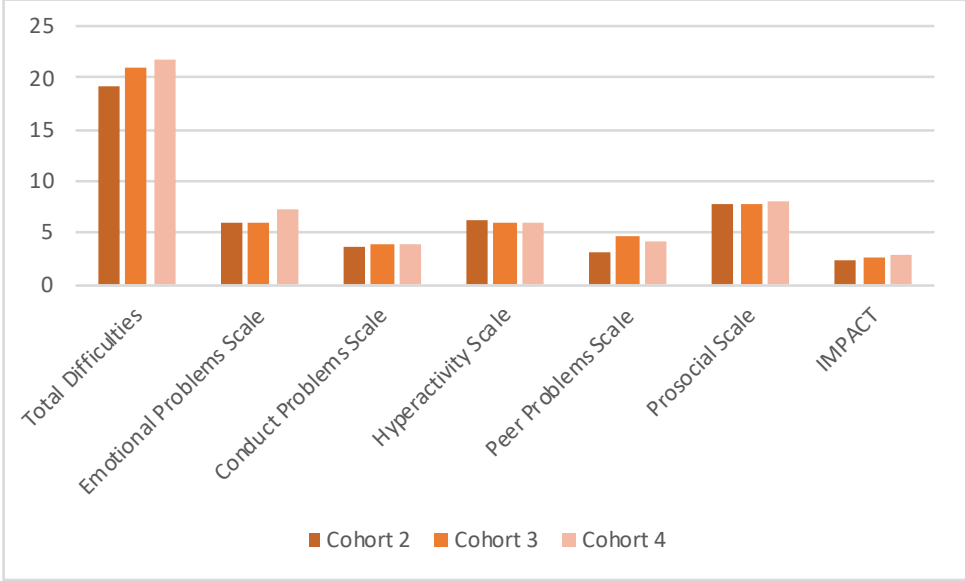
The GOFG data was further explored to understand whether there were any differences in presenting need amongst the cohorts. Data was available for cohorts 2, 3 and 4 and is presented in the following tables.

Table Thirteen: GOFG SDQ Scores Across Cohorts at Time One

SDQ Scale	Cohort 2 Mean	Cohort 3 Mean	Cohort 4 mean
Total Difficulties	19.18	21.00	21.73
Emotional Problems Scale	5.91	5.86	7.36
Conduct Problems Scale	3.71	4.00	3.92
Hyperactivity Scale	6.14	6.00	6.08
Peer Problems Scale	3.21	4.67	4.15
Prosocial Scale	7.86	7.78	7.92
Impact	2.43	2.67	2.83

This data is displayed in the following chart.

Graph Three: GOFG SDQ scores across cohorts at Time One



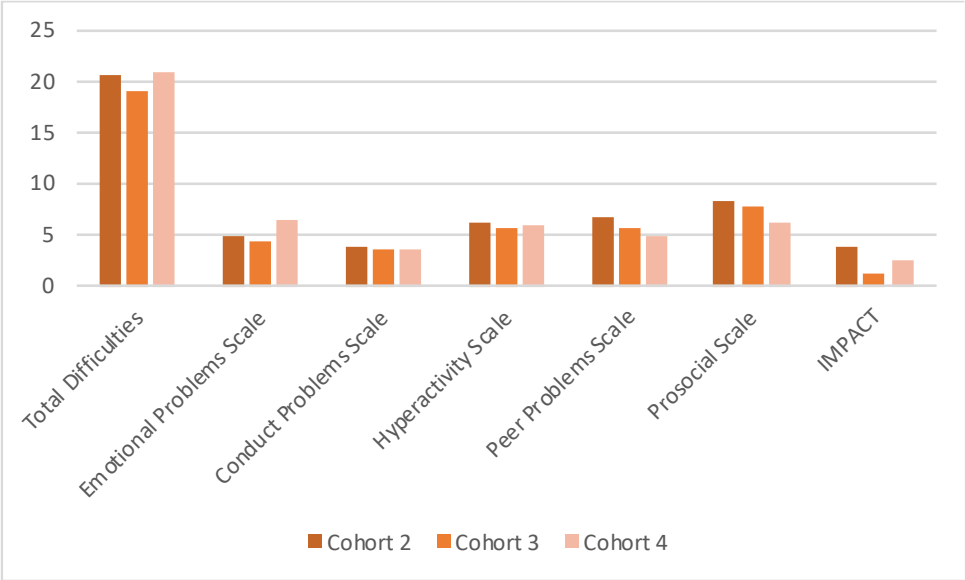
It is apparent that there were increasing levels of needs comparing cohorts 2, 3 and 4. SDQ total scores are the highest for cohort 4, by some 2 points. The mean emotional problems scale is also much higher for cohort 4 and the mean peer problems scale is higher for cohorts 3 and 4.

Table Fourteen: GOFG SDQ Scores Across Cohorts at Time Two

SDQ Scale	Cohort 2 Mean	Cohort 3 Mean	Cohort 4 mean
Total Difficulties	20.67	19.17	20.80
Emotional Problems Scale	5.00	4.33	6.40
Conduct Problems Scale	3.75	3.50	3.60
Hyperactivity Scale	6.25	5.67	5.80
Peer Problems Scale	6.67	5.67	5.67
Prosocial Scale	8.25	7.67	6.20
IMPACT	3.75	1.25	2.50

This data is displayed in the following chart.

Graph Four: GOFG SDQ scores across cohorts at Time Two



There were some interesting comparisons at time two between cohorts 2, 3 and 4. SDQ mean total scores are similar for cohorts 2 and 4 and slightly lower for cohort 3. Cohort 4 has the highest mean scores in the emotional problems scale and conduct problems scale. Cohort 2 has the highest peer problems scale mean and cohort 2 also has the most positive prosocial scale mean. The impact scale varies between cohorts with cohort 2 demonstrating the highest levels of impact.

It is also important to note that for cohorts 2 and 3, time two is the conclusion of their involvement with GOFG, whereas for cohort 4, time two is the mid-point of their intervention (the time period is the same (i.e. 3 months).

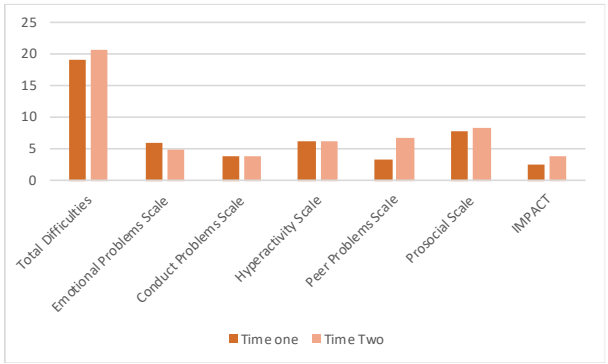
Given that only cohort 4 completed assessments at a time three point with a small (n=2) sample, this analysis has not been repeated. For reference, cohort 4, time 3 data is presented in table 15

The following graphs break this data down further and provide summary of times one and two scores by cohort.

Tables Fifteen and Graphs Five: GOFG SDQ Scores by Cohort at Times One and Two

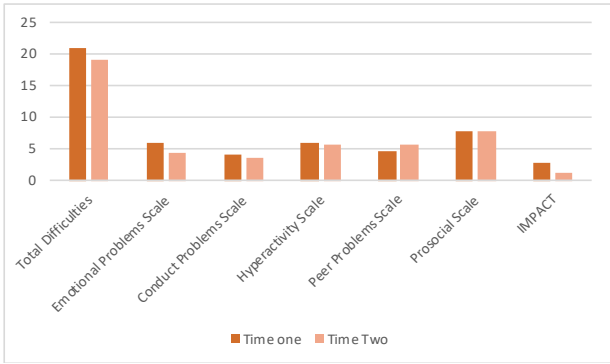
Cohort Two

SDQ Scale	Time One Mean	Time Two Mean
Total Difficulties	19.18	20.67
Emotional Problems Scale	5.91	5
Conduct Problems Scale	3.71	3.75
Hyperactivity Scale	6.14	6.25
Peer Problems Scale	3.21	6.67
Prosocial Scale	7.86	8.25
Impact Scale	2.43	3.75



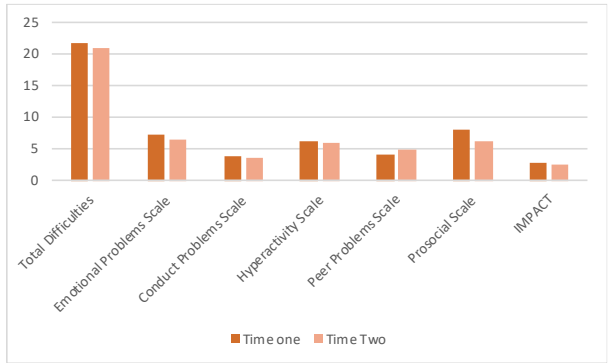
Cohort Three

SDQ	Time One Mean	Time Two Mean
Total Difficulties	21.00	19.17
Emotional Problems Scale	5.86	4.33
Conduct Problems Scale	4.00	3.5
Hyperactivity Scale	6.00	5.67
Peer Problems Scale	4.67	5.67
Prosocial Scale	7.78	7.67
Impact Scale	2.67	1.25



Cohort Four

SDQ	Time One Mean	Time Two Mean	Time Three Mean
Total Difficulties	21.73	20.8	19.5
Emotional Problems Scale	7.36	6.4	6.5
Conduct Problems Scale	3.92	3.6	2
Hyperactivity Scale	6.08	5.8	7
Peer Problems Scale	4.15	5.00	4
Prosocial Scale	7.92	6.2	7
Impact Scale	2.83	2.5	3



5.6 SWLS, SWEMWBS and MOSSI scales

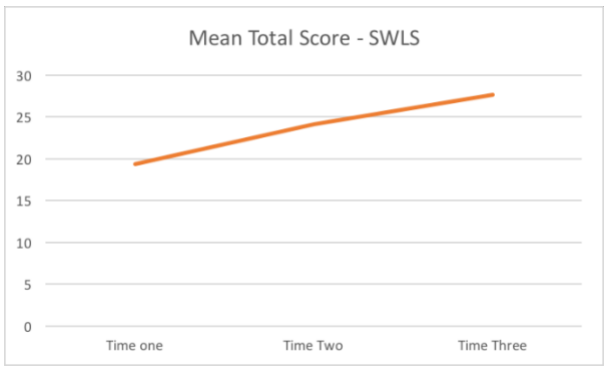
Table Sixteen: GOFG Young People Mean Assessment Scores

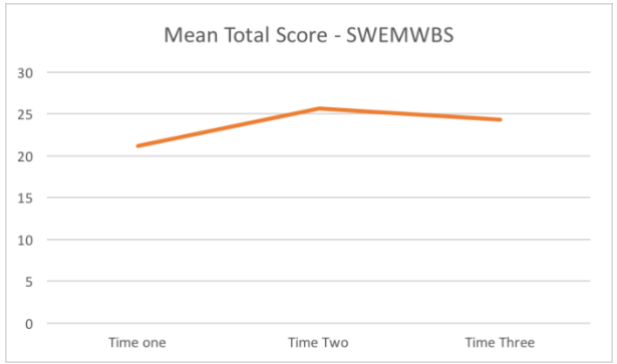
The following table displays participant's SWLS, SWEMWBS and MOSSI total scores at each time point.

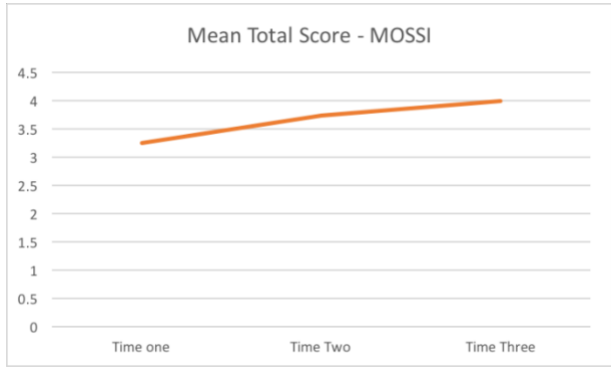
Scale	Time One			Time Two			Time Three		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
SWLS	23	19.35	7.52	10	24.08	7.06	5	27.60	3.91
SWEMWBS	21	21.19	6.23	12	25.67	6.02	3	24.33	5.03
MOSSI	24	3.25	1.00	11	3.74	1.09	6	4.00	0.80

This data is displayed in the following charts.

Graphs Nine: GOFG Young People Assessment Scores







As can be observed in the above data, SWLS scores steadily rise in a positive direction. Whilst the sample size is small and statistical analysis is not possible, there are clear improvements in scores at each time point. Scores between 5-9 indicate the respondent is extremely dissatisfied with life, whereas scores

between 31-35 indicate the respondent is extremely satisfied. A score of 20 represents a neutral point on the scale. The GOFG cohort have moved from an almost neutral point, to an increasingly satisfied point.

The SWEMWBS scale direction is interesting. There is a reduction in total scores when time one is compared to time 3. However, there is an improvement in total scores at time two. Scores on the SWEMWBS range from 7 to 35 and higher scores indicate higher positive mental well-being. The GOFG cohort indicates higher positive mental well-being at time two compared to time one, but this decreases slightly by time three.

The MOSSI subscale also moves in a positive direction over times one, two and three. Whilst not as pronounced as the SWLS, it is a positive improvement.

Again, it is important to note that only cohort 4 completed assessments at time 3, therefore the data is further analysed across the three scales within cohorts.

Time One

	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
SWLS	17.67	22.43	18.43
SWEMWBS	21	23.67	19.29
MOSSI	3	3.67	3.07

Time Two

	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
SWLS	18	25.17	25.5
SWEMWBS	21	26.8	26.25
MOSSI	3.06	4.03	3.72

Time Three

	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
SWLS	-	-	27.6
SWEMWBS	-	-	48.67
MOSSI	-	-	4

The data indicates that SWLS scores increase across all cohorts over time. The SWEMWBS stays the same for cohort 2 over time, but increases in cohorts 3 and 4 over time. The MOSSI increases across all cohorts.

As the GOFG project continues into its next phase, continued collection of SDQ scores and a systematic process of data collection will support more in-depth analyses and an assessment of changes in child-level strengths and difficulties that will support the team in improving outcomes for children and families.

5.7 Social Network Analysis and Social Support – Personal Network Results

Participants were aged from 14-17 years old at the time of conducting the first network interview. The young person was asked to nominate up to a maximum of 20 people they considered important to them or who had an important role in their life. They also had the opportunity to nominate people that had a negative influence on their lives. Most young people did not nominate negative ties and generally thought of people in their close networks in positive terms. The young person was asked to rank on a 5-point Likert scale (from 0-4) how likely it is that the nominated person can provide different levels of emotional and practical support, where zero is no support at all up to four where they can offer lots of support. Data was gathered for each network tie and included identifying the type of relationship that tied them together: were they a parent (including step-parent); sibling (including step-siblings); extended family member (including cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparent); friend; boyfriend, or mentor (including social worker, teacher, foster carer, youth worker). Basic demographic information was gathered on members of each personal network and included gender and approximate age. The young person was also asked their perception of the strength of ties between members of the support network (alter to alter ties).

Overall 11 young people completed a network interview that asked them questions about their support networks before they joined the project (T1). A further six of those young people completed another network interview that asked them the same questions only focusing this time on their support networks since joining the project. Two respondents were from Cohort 3 (3 month intervention) and nine were from Cohort 4, four of which completed interviews for T1 and T2 (6 month intervention). Once a network was generated the young person was asked to answer the following questions from the Norbeck Social Support Scale about each person in their network, and to rank their importance to them on a scale of 0-4.

1. How much does this person make you feel liked or loved?
2. How much does this person make you feel respected or admired?
3. How much can you confide in this person?
4. How much does this person agree with or support your actions or thoughts?
5. If you needed to borrow £10, a ride to the doctor, or some other immediate help, how much could this person usually help?
6. If you were confined to bed for several weeks, how much could this person help you?

Additional Question:

7. Has this person ever been in trouble with the police or any other authority (e.g. social work, youth offending teams, or excluded from school)?

Questions 1 to 4 (scored 0-4) represent **emotional support** (*max score 16*) and questions 5 and 6 (scored 0-4), **practical support** (*max score 8)*. A total score was then generated for each nominated alter for the six questions generating a total functional support score for each participant. A seventh question was included which was labelled 'authority conflict'. Participants were not asked to state any offences or details but were encouraged to give a yes or no answer with the additional option of don't know.

We start by reporting the summarised demographic data for each personal network at Time 1 (Table Seventeen) and Time 2 (Table Eighteen), highlighting the structure, tie type and strength of ties. Ego1 and Ego2 are from cohort 3 and Ego3 to Ego 11 are from cohort 4. Ego1 to Ego 6 have measurements at two time points. A total of 11 participants nominated 95 sources of social support.

Table Seventeen: Demographic data, tie type and strength – Time 1

ID	Density No. Ties	Tie Strength	Age	Male	Female	Mum	Dad	Step-Dad	Sibling / Step	Boy-friend	Extended Family	Friend	Carer/ Mentor
Ego1	10	3.7	26.8	2	8	1	0	0	1	0	4	4	0
Ego2	9	3.9	24	3	6	1	0	0	3	0	5	0	0
Ego3	6	3	38.5	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	0
Ego4	5	3.8	35	3	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
Ego5	14	4	22.7	8	6	1	0	1	8	0	1	3	0
Ego6	11	3.3	28	6	5	1	0	1	1	0	0	5	3
Ego7	9	3	18.4	2	7	1	1	0	0	0	6	3	0
Ego8	5	3.8	16	2	3	1	0	0	0	1	4	1	1
Ego9	9	3	36.8	3	6	1	1	0	3	0	3	1	0
Ego10	6	3.5	32	4	2	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	0
Ego11	11	3	27.5	5	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	6
N = 11	8.6 Average	3.5 Average	27.8 Average	3.7 Average	5 Average	11 Total	6 Total	2 Total	1.6 Average	2 Total	2.5 Total	2 Average	10 Total

The density of a network is the number of ties connected to ego (e.g. the young person). The social support personal networks range in size from 5 to 14 people. The average network density is 8.6. Tie strength is a measure of how strong the relationship tie is between the young person and the person they nominate. Tie strength ranges from 3 to 3.9 on a scale of 0-4. Where the average age for the people in Ego's network is low, this is because younger siblings were frequently nominated, bringing the overall age down. Average ages range from 16 to 38.5 years. On average there are 5 female and just under 4 males nominated per network.

All young people nominated their mother as an important source of social support, with only 6 naming fathers and two mentioning step-fathers. Siblings (including step-siblings) were named as important sources of support by 7 of the 11 young people and 8 named extended family (close family friends are included in this category). Young people had on average 2 friends they could rely on for support. However, one young person did not nominate any friends and many only named 1 person. The highest number of friends nominated was 5.

Finally, three young people named other mentors (not project related) and trusted adults as additional sources of support. This is represented by the carers/mentor category and includes teachers, youth workers, foster carers and social workers. For one young person this source of support was extremely important, naming 6 people in this group.

Table Eighteen: Demographic data, tie type and strength – Time 2

ID	Density No. Ties	Tie Strength	Age	Male	Female	Mom	Dad	Step-Dad	Sibling / Step	Boy-friend	Extended Family	Friend	Carer/ Mentor
Ego1	19	3.2	23	8	11	1	0	0	1	1	4	12	0
Ego2	14	3.5	23.5	3	11	1	0	0	3	0	5	3	2
Ego3	10	4	26.7	3	7	1	0	0	1	0	4	4	0
Ego4	7	3.6	30.4	5	2	1	1	0	3	0	0	2	0
Ego5	9	2.3	17.4	6	3	1	0	0	7	0	1	0	0
Ego6	8	4	20	5	3	1	1	1	5	0	0	1	0
N = 6	**11.2** Average	**3.4** Average	**23.5** Average	**5** Average	**6** Total	**6** Total	**2** Total	**1** Total	**3.3** Average	**1** Total	**2.3** Average	**3.6** Average	**2** Total

The second time point was assessed towards the end of the young person's time on the project. This table highlights the demographic data, tie type and strength at Time 2 to show any change in the personal network structures. Time 1 data for Ego1 to Ego6 is also reported here for comparability across timepoints. Social support personal networks range in size from 8 to 19 people (T1: size 5-14). The average network density is 11.2 (T1: density 9.1). Tie strength ranges from 2.3 to 4 on a scale of 0-4 (T1: strength 3-4). Average ages range from 17.4 to 30.4 years (T1: ages 24-38.5). On average there are 6 females and just under 5 males nominated per network (T1: 5 females & 4 males).

All young people mentioned their mother at both time points, with only 2 naming fathers and 1 mentioning a step-father at Time 2. Siblings (including step-siblings) were named as important sources of support by all 6 young people (T1: siblings 5) and 4 young people named extended family (T1: 4). Young people had on average 3.6 friends they could rely on for support (T1: 2.6) with five out of six making nominations. However, one young person did not nominate any friends and it is important to note that this is a different young person to Time 1. The highest number of friends nominated was 12. Finally, one young people named 2 mentors (both project related) as additional sources of support (T1: non-project mentors 3). The young person at T1 no longer refers to the previous mentoring relationships for support and a young person in T2 has increased their social support network by including both project related mentors.

The following tables highlight the Norbeck Social Support Scale results for *Emotional Support*, *Practical Support* and the overall *Functional Score* for cohort 3 and 4. Although numbers in each cohort are small, it is still possible to detect differences between both groups in relation to need and intervention dosage. This will be discussed in greater detail in section 5.8. Some of these differences are reflected in the Ketso and Life Story analysis.

The emotional support score is made up of questions 1 – 4 with possible total score of 16. It asked about how much a young person feels loved/liked, respected, supported and confide in members of their network. Practical support consists of questions 5 and 6 with a possible total score of 8. Practical support covers the ability to ask for help with money and care. The functional support score combines the other support scores with a maximum of 24 possible. The final question on 'authority conflict' highlights the number of possible negative peer and family influences for the young person by indicating if they have ever been in trouble with any authority, broadly defined.

Table Nineteen: Support network change overtime – Cohort 3 T1 and T2 (3 month interval)

	Emotional Support	Emotional Support	Practical Support	Practical Support	Functional Score	Functional Score	Authority Conflict	Authority Conflict
ID	**Time 1**	**Time 2**	**Time 1**	**Time 2**	**Time 1**	**Time 2**	**Time 1**	**Time 2**
Ego1	12.9	11.1	4.9	4	17.8	15.1	1	2
Ego2	13.2	13.2	7.3	5.6	20.5	18.8	2	2
Average	**13**	**12.1**	**6.1**	**4.8**	**19.1**	**17**	**1.5**	**2**

For Ego1 there is a slight downward move between T1 and T2 across all scores. Conflict authority scores move from one person in the network to two. At T2 practical support scores 4 out of a possible 8 and overall, the functional score drops almost 3 points. These lower scores can be explained in part due to increased network size and diversity at T2. Ego1 names the same school friend at T1 and T2 as having been in conflict with authority, plus someone from their new social circle at T2.

The emotional support scores remain stable across both time points for Ego2. As is shown with the demographic data, the network increases in size and diversity. Practical support drops over time but the authority conflict score remains the same with Ego2 naming a brother and cousin both times.

Table Twenty: Support network change overtime – Cohort 4 T1 and T2 (6 month interval)

	Emotional Support	Emotional Support	Practical Support	Practical Support	Functional Score	Functional Score	Authority Conflict	Authority Conflict
ID	**Time 1**	**Time 2**	**Time 1**	**Time 2**	**Time 1**	**Time 2**	**Time 1**	**Time 2**
*Ego3**	*11.3*	*10.8*	*6.8*	*2.6*	*18.2*	*13.4*	*3*	*11*
Ego4	11.6	13.3	6.8	6.4	18.4	19.7	1	2
Ego5	15	14	7	3.6	22	17.6	33	22
Ego6	1212	15	6	8	18	23	55	66
Average N=3*	**12.88**	**14.1**	**6.6**	**6**	**19.44**	**20.1**	**3**	**3.3**

*Table scores are calculated without Ego3

Missing data around practical support for Ego3 has a significant negative impact on the individual and overall functional support scores. If it were to be included the functional support scores for T2 would be much lower at 16.5. For this reason, the table only displays totals based on three cases

(Ego4-Ego6). Authority conflict decreases over time as one friend is removed/replaced. Mother, father and friend are nominated at T1. However, there is missing data for T2 and the young person's dad has been removed from their support network. Even though new non-project friends were introduced we do not know if they have ever been in trouble with any authority.

Ego4 makes a substantial improvement to their emotional support scores, moving from 11.6 (T1) to 13.3 (T2). The young person made some big changes to their support network by removing a boyfriend with an authority conflict score and including more friends & siblings as well as new friends made via the project. However, at T2 two newly added network members, a sister and a friend, have been in conflict with authority.

Ego5 also makes a substantial change in their network structure reducing the size of their network over time. At T1 mum, step-dad and her older brother are named as having been conflict with authority. This reduces to 2 by T2 as her step-dad no longer listed as being a source of support. Friends and several siblings have also been removed from the network. Some friends and an aunt have been removed and a cousin introduced. All the younger siblings remain important sources of emotional support across both time periods.

Emotional, practical and functional support scores all improve over time for Ego6. However, the number of people in their personal network with conflict scores is much higher than the others. The personal network includes 2 baby brothers and these are the only ones without an authority conflict score. Their mum, step-dad, 2 friends and brother are highlighted at T1 as having been in conflict with some form of authority. At T2 Ego6 has reconnected with their dad and they join the network along with another sister, both of whom have authority conflict scores, bringing the total to 6 for T2.

Comparisons between cohort 3 (3 month intervention) and cohort 4 (6 months intervention) are descriptive and contextual, not statistical, due to the small numbers in each group that engaged with the network interviews across both time points, n=6. However, they do indicate possible trends and differences between length of interventions and outcomes. In Table Twenty-One we can see that both cohorts start with similar levels of emotional support at T1. For cohort 3 there is a very slight decrease in emotional support at T2.

Table Twenty-One: Social support comparisons between cohorts over time

	Emotional Support	Emotional Support	Practical Support	Practical Support	Functional Support	Functional Support	Authority Conflict	Authority Conflict
ID	Time 1	Time 2	Time 1	Time 2	Time 1	Time 2	Time 1	Time 2
C3	13	12.11	6.1	4.8	19.1	17	1.5	2
C4*	12.8	14.1	6.6	6	19.4	20.1	3	3.3

*Cohort 4 n=3

In contrast cohort 4 have increased their scores for this measure. Cohort 4 have also marginally improved their overall functional support scores during their time on the project.

Finally, Table Twenty-Two presents cross-sectional data for an additional five young people (Ego7-Ego11) from cohort 4. We were not able to collect T2 measures for this group as they did not attend the final activity session where the follow up network interviews took place.

Table Twenty-Two: Support networks prior to the project for cohort 4 - T1 only

	Emotional Support	Practical Support	Functional Score	Authority Conflict
ID	**Time 1**	**Time 1**	**Time 1**	**Time 1**
Ego7	12.4	5.4	17.8	5
Ego8	8.6	4.6	13.2	1
Ego9	9.6	4.6	14.4	2
Ego10	11.1	4.3	15.5	2
Ego11	14.7	5.6	20.3	2
Total N = 5	**11.6**	**5**	**16.2**	**2.4**

This group displays lower emotional support overall than each of the other two groups with Ego8 and Ego9 being significantly lower. Ego8 has a small network mostly consisting of close family members, one friend and a boyfriend that contributes to the authority conflict score. Ego9 nominated one friend for social support and the rest of the network is made up of family and extended family with her dad and sister contributing to the authority conflict score of 2.

The personal network for Ego7 includes five members with a history of conflict with authorities, these are the young person's Dad, Mum and older sister along with two friends. Ego10 has the lowest overall practical support score at 4.3. Their network consists of a boyfriend, friend, some extended family and includes Mum and Dad who contribute to the conflict score of 2. Finally, Ego11 indicates a higher level of emotional support than the rest of this group. They also have 6 mentor-like relationship ties, so a lot of formal support is available to this young person.

The next section expands on these findings through a contextual qualitative analysis of the SNA data.

5.8 Social Networks and Social Support – Contextual Analysis

In this section we investigate the findings from section 5.7 in more detail and provide a qualitative contextual analysis that explores some core themes. These include examining family ties and emotional and practical support, friendships, network diversity and themes around conflict. Networks appear homogenous and closed at T1 and remain relatively homogenous at T2. However, in all six cases where we have follow- up data, some kind of network change occurs. The cohort 4 participants Ego7-Ego 11 have lower emotional support, practical support and overall functional support scores than the other groups combined. This potentially indicates less developed support structures and more emotional and wellbeing needs as well as being a possible indicator of poverty or deprivation. Unfortunately, we were not able to track any network change as these young people did not attend the final activity session where T2 network interviews were conducted.

Family Ties: Emotional and practical support
Most young people interviewed indicated relatively high levels of social support available to them, primarily from close family members. Ego8 and Ego9 are two notable exceptions with lower than average emotional support scores, 8.6 and 9.6 respectively. However, they did not attend the follow up interview so we cannot assess how their personal networks may have changed over the six months on the project. Durable social support is represented by the relatively high scores for strength of ties in each personal network. The majority of these ties were to a parent, sibling and to some extent extended family. Young people's personal networks are able to provide emotional support, with mothers playing a key role. All participants nominated their mother as an important source of social support and 8 nominated both parents (including step-dads). Of all nominated ties for the eleven participants, 54 were female and 41 were male.

Whist most young people interviewed appear to be able to access good quality emotional support they are less likely to have practical support networks as strong. Practical support can include being able to borrow money from someone or for them to provide sustained care to the young person if they are ill. Lower scores here may indicate issues with deprivation and poverty. We cannot say this for sure as we do not know the socio-economic demographics of each young person's family background, but we do know that the areas from which young people came are some of the most deprived in the country.

Additionally, some participants came from BAME cultures where familial roles and expectations may have had an influence on the structure and diversity of their support networks, particularly prior to joining the project. Some young people's support nominations included very young siblings. Whilst very young siblings were important to individuals, they could not reasonably be expected to offer any tangible support in the context of the network questions and this may have had a small negative effect on the practical support measures, yet a neutral or positive effect on emotional support scores. This in turn may also have had a negative impact on overall functional scores. Concern and care for younger siblings was also evidenced during focus group discussions with Ketso and the Life Story narratives, with young people sometimes expressing worry and anxiety for them.

It is worth noting however, that there was evidence of fluctuating relationships with siblings, fathers and step-fathers. Some of these changes can be viewed as positive where a dad or another sibling is introduced into the young person's support network at T2. In other cases, it may reflect disruption, conflict or changing circumstances where a step-dad or sibling tie is dropped at T2.

Friendships
Few friends were nominated at T1. This suggests that when young people join the project, they have strong but closed networks with little diversity. Ketso and the Life Story narratives reveal that

young people think making friends is important and there is evidence of this happening between T1 and T2 with the introduction of new friends from within the project, but also outside the project. There were some examples of ties nominated at Time 1 with a low importance score, that then disappeared from the network at Time 2. This would suggest that over the life of the project some 'friends' were dropped or were no longer considered to be able to provide them with meaningful social support. These friendship network changes indicate that young people are using their agency to make decisions about the quality of their personal networks. This may indicate that overall the quality of emotional social support can improve over time even if the absolute scores do not.

Network diversity: Moving towards independence

Being involved with GOFG provided opportunities for G&YW to diversify their personal networks by making new friends and joining in new activities on the project and externally. One of the young people completed the GOFG programme early as they were offered a full-time educational training course. This opened up their network providing new social contacts and resources (social capital) and created a new group of friends away from the core of the family and friends they knew from school. The young person was not on the training programme long before the network interview was conducted, relationships were new and likely to still be fairly superficial despite the young person feeling they could turn to many of their new friends for emotional support. In this case the practical support scores were lower, likely reflecting the fact these relationships were in the early stages of development.

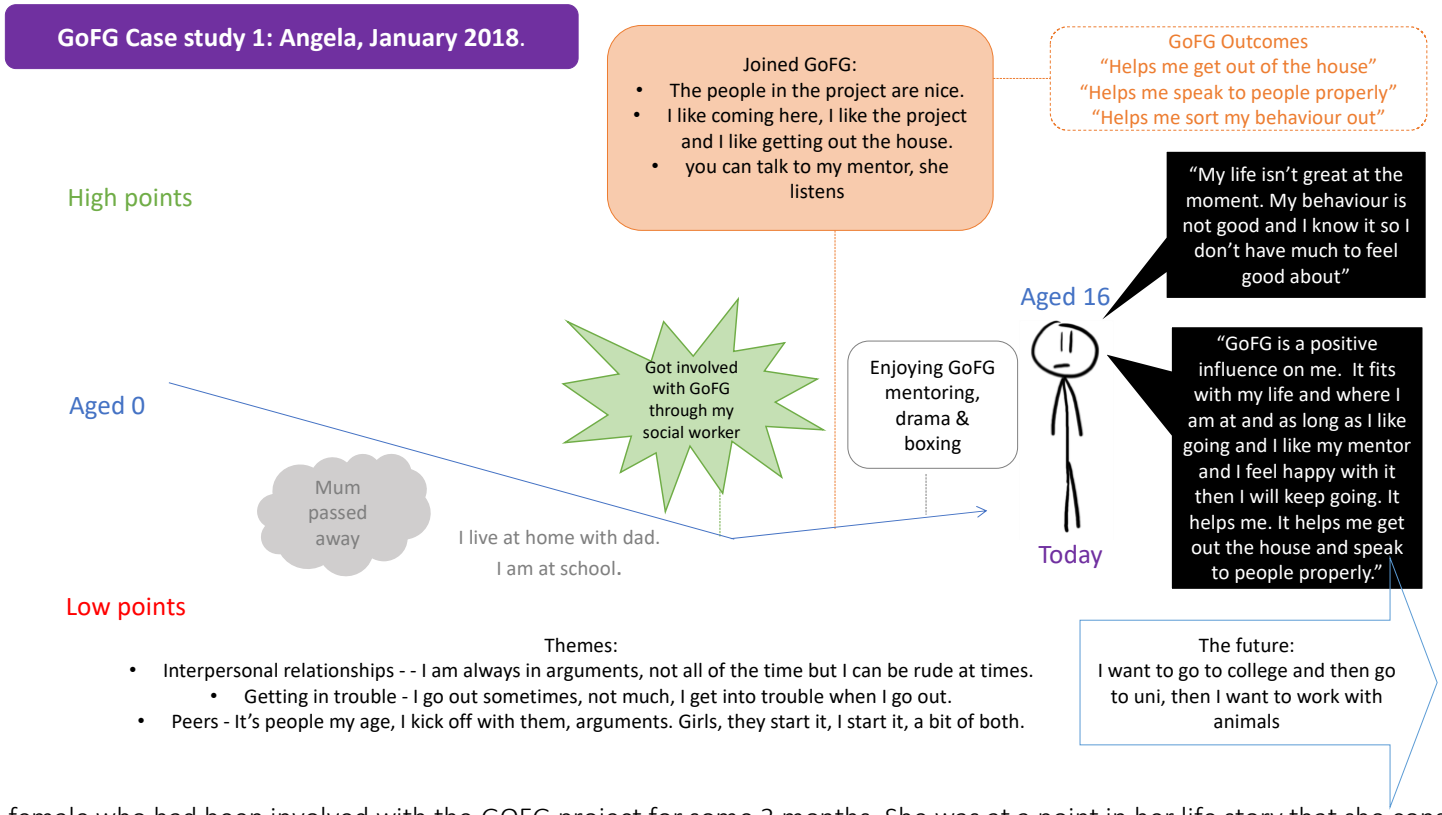
Whilst having a lower practical support or functional support score at T2 may appear negative at first, our contextual knowledge of the young people and evidence from other sources helps us to explain some of those changes. There are other examples of young people expanding the size of their network, opening up different opportunities for emotional and practical support. However, as a network becomes more diverse it is less likely that an individual will consider all members to be as equally important so the overall strength of ties will change. There is also evidence of network shrinkage. One young person dropped a negative friendship tie and sibling relationship and reduced their core network to family members they likely felt were more supportive. This suggests that network expansion is not always the right option for a young person, but the quality of those support ties can be as important as network diversity.

Conflict with authority

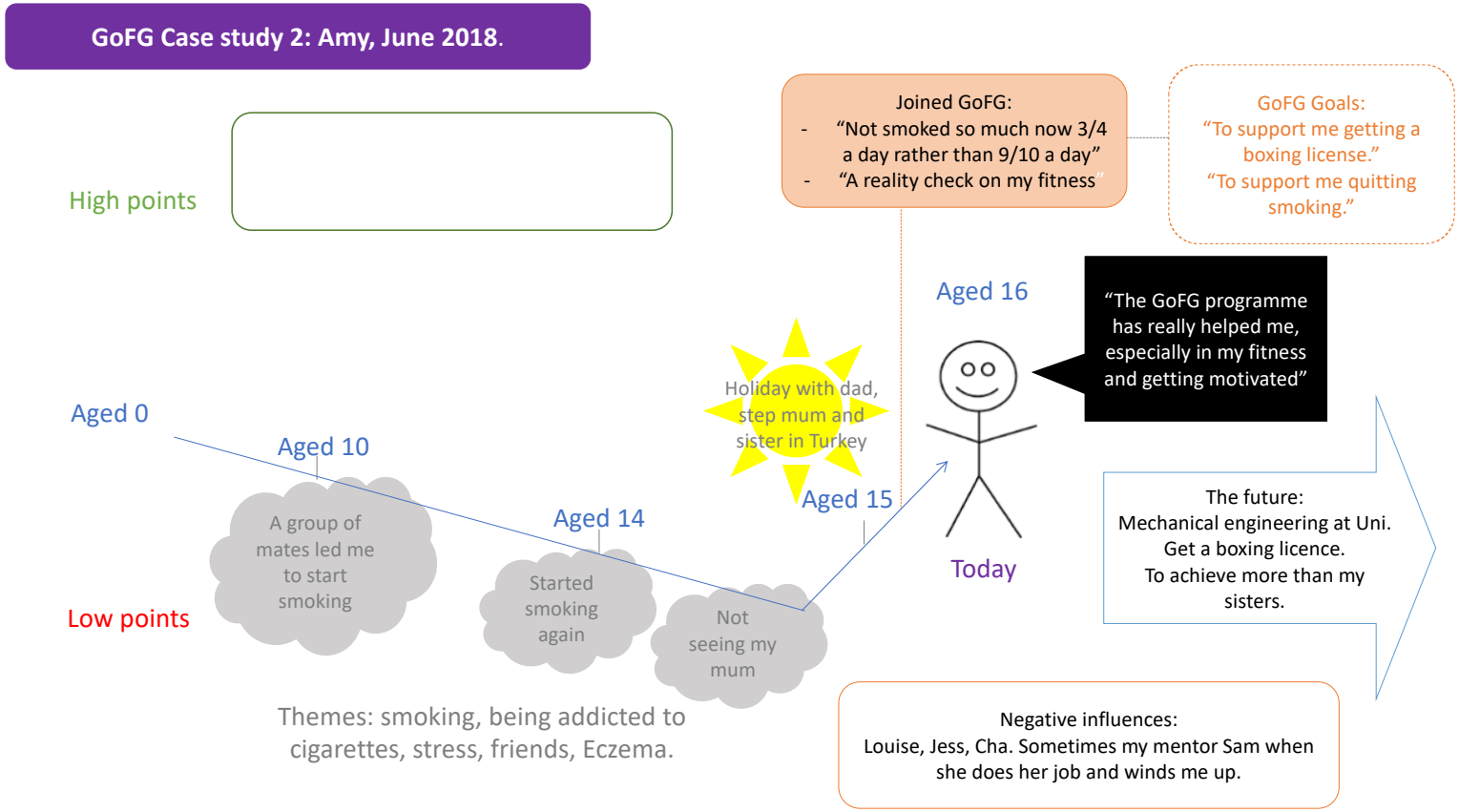
All participants nominated at least one person in their close network at both time points who had a history of getting in trouble with various people or organisations in positions of power or authority. In order to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the young person's network ties we did not ask them to say what they may have been in trouble for. Prompts were given that included school exclusions, getting in trouble with social workers or the police. In many cases close family members, mother, father, sibling have been in conflict with authority. This is the young person's perception of the conflict. We do not know the type or severity of this, it could be a simple school detention, or a criminal offence with a custodial sentence.

The next section presents the results of the analysis of Life Story interviews.

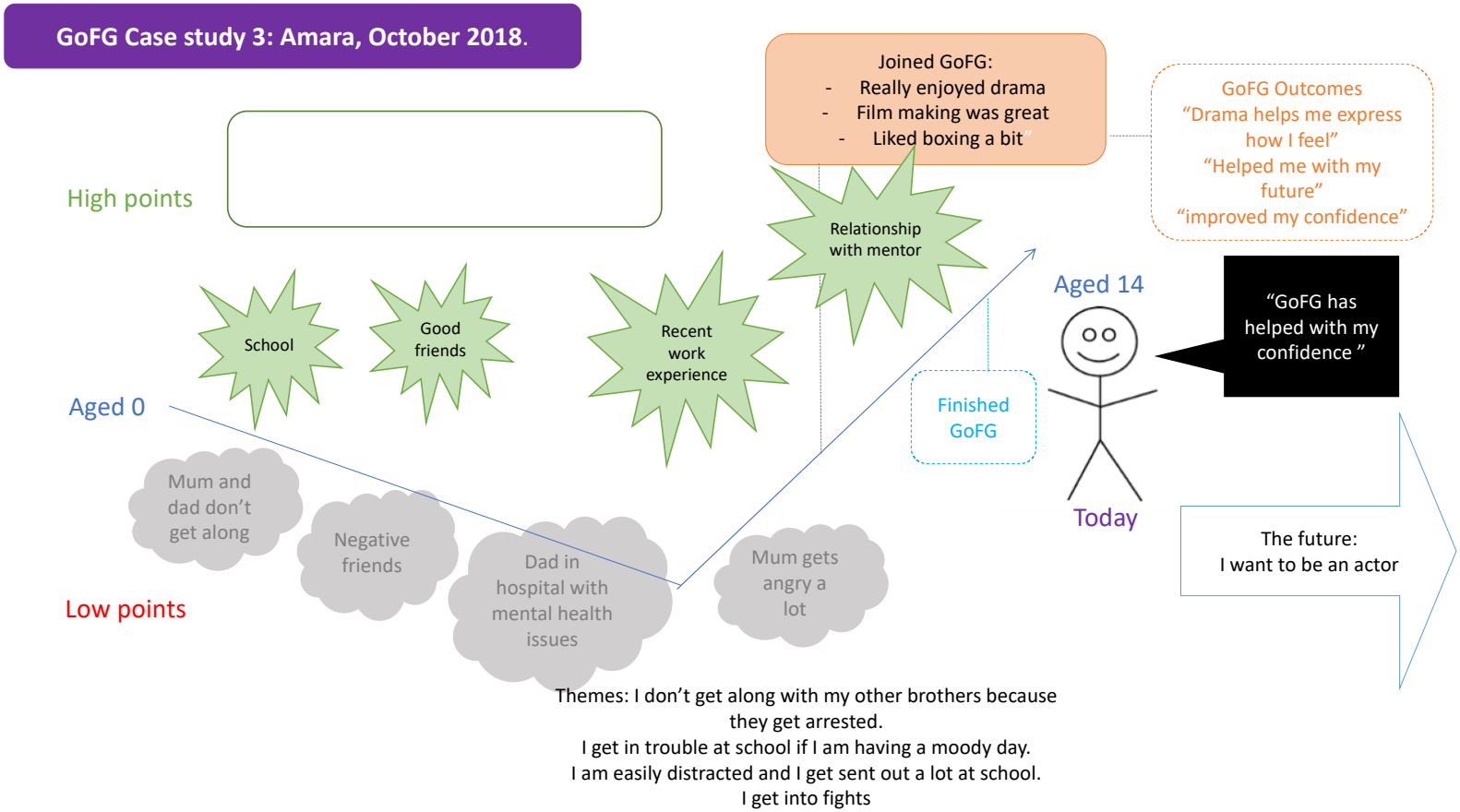
5.9 Life Story interviews



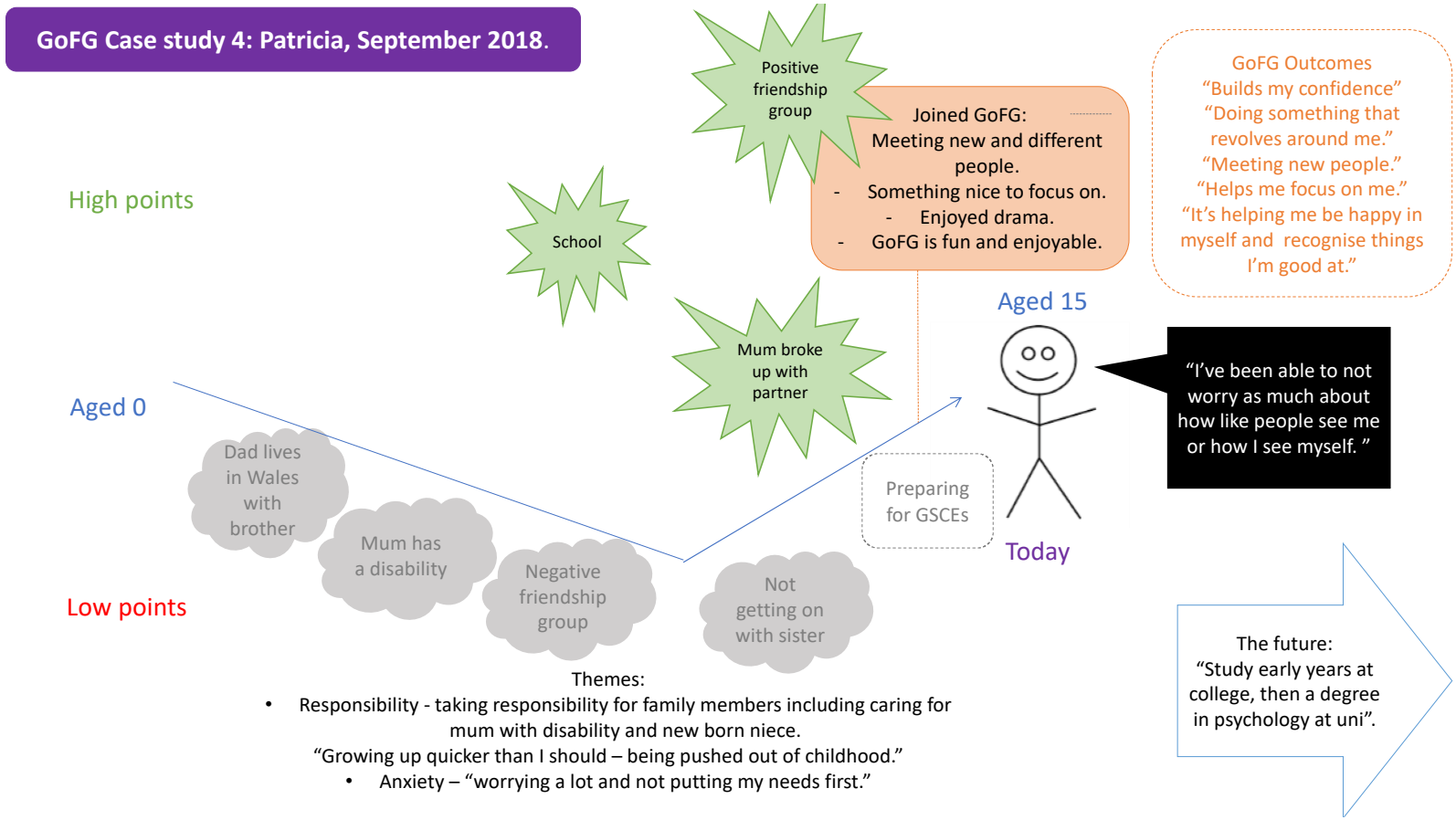
Angela is a 16 year old female who had been involved with the GOFG project for some 3 months. She was at a point in her life story that she considered as 'not great' and that she didn't have 'much to feel good about'. She identified that her behaviour could be poor at times, saying she could be 'rude' and she 'gets into trouble' but that her behaviour was improving. She viewed that her Life Story began when her mum passed away. Angela reflected about turning points and described how she finds it difficult to get on with people her age, particularly girls. She described how she got into trouble a lot when she was out with peers. A turning point was described as stopping getting angry and taking responsibility. She doesn't think she has reached that turning point quite yet but getting involved with GOFG is helping her get there. Angela has enjoyed her work with GOFG but has a better relationship with her new mentor, who she said 'listens'. Angela thinks that GOFG fits with where she is at because she enjoys attending the drama and boxing sessions and feels that her relationship with her new mentor is working better. Her long-term goals are to go to college and then university. Angela's more immediate goals towards this are to get out of the house, and when she is out with peers to improve her behaviour and her social skills. She feels that GOFG is helping her to realise those goals and 'take responsibility for myself.'



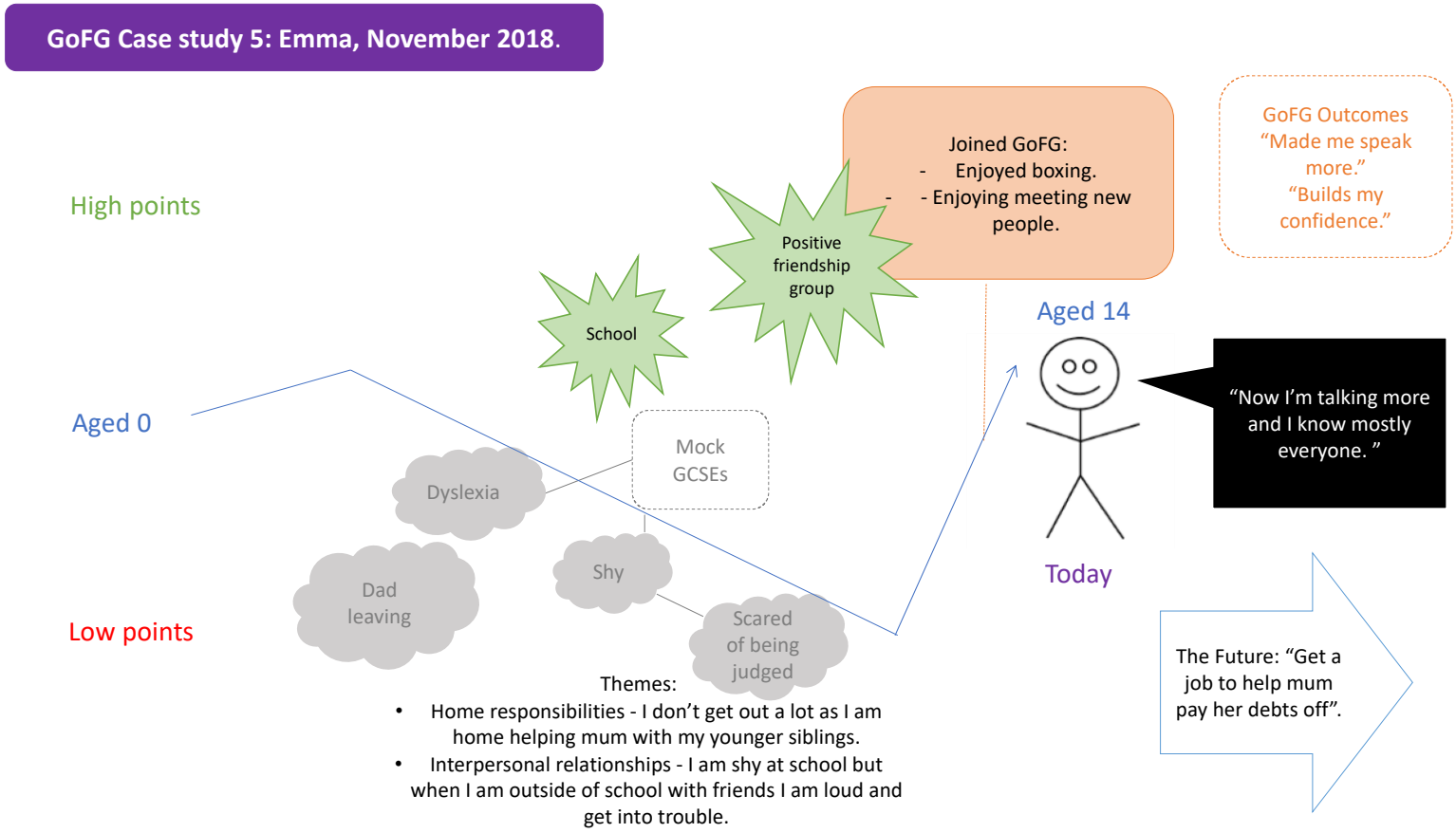
Amy is a 16-year-old female who had been involved with the GOFG project for some 2 months. When she reflected upon her Life Story, many events and feelings were compared against her smoking habit, when this commenced and the effect that it has on her health and well-being. She considered herself to be at a good point in her Life Story and that she has moved on from the low points that she has encountered, which she viewed to have started at around 10 years of age when she began smoking because a group of friends led her to start her habit. Other low points were starting smoking again and also not seeing her mum. Her friends as well as her family were big influences on her Life Story. A turning point was a recent holiday which Amy described as really happy and boosted her to look towards the future which facilitated her engagement with GOFG. She was motivated to engage with the project to help her improve her health and fitness and stop smoking. She described GOFG as fitting with her well because of its sports offer which has now inspired her to seek a boxing licence and look towards the future more positively.



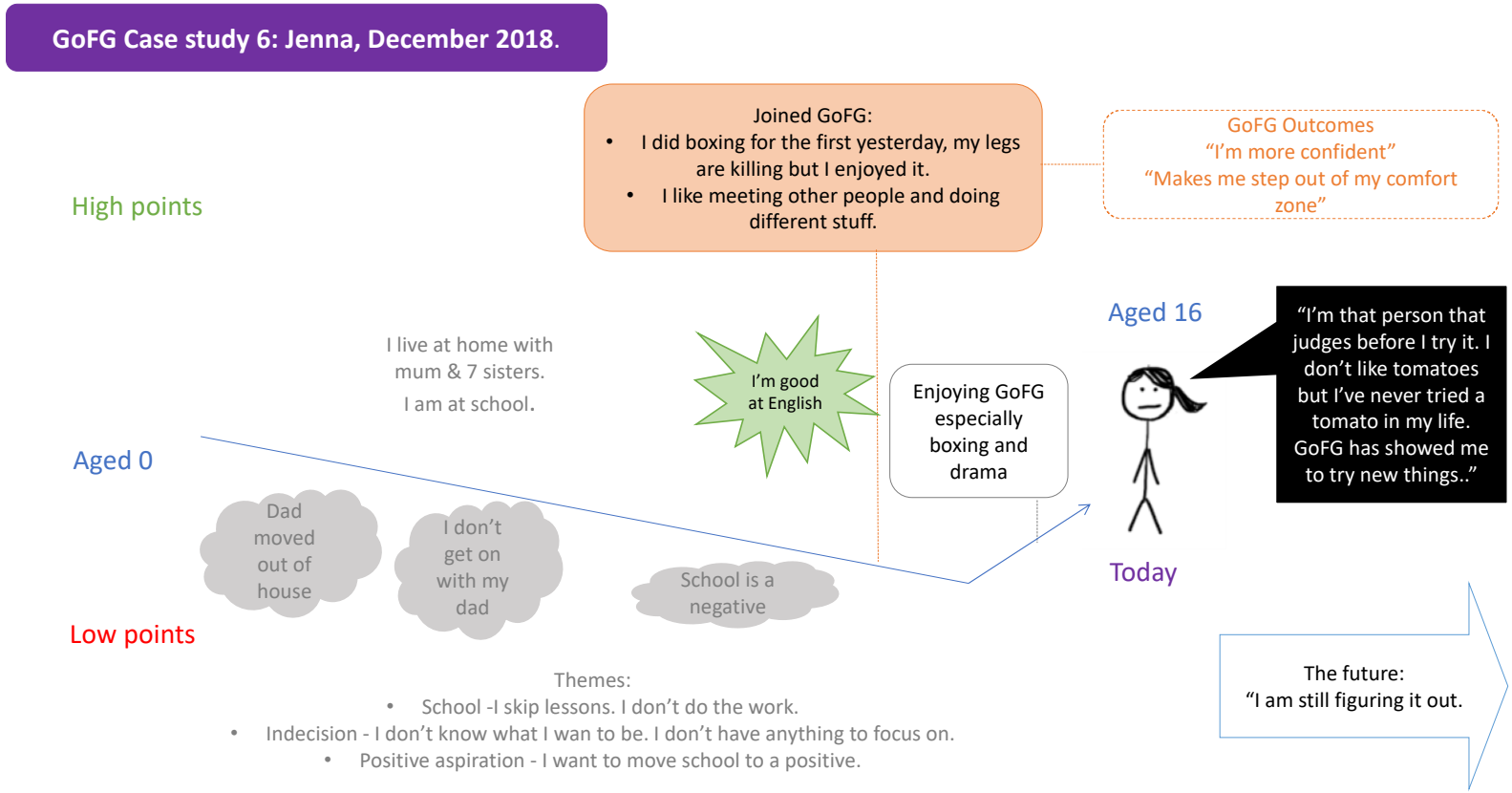
Amara is a 14-year-old girl who had completed the GOFG project. Her life story was heavily influenced by her family with her low points around her parents not getting on and also her father's mental health. Whilst she enjoyed school and considered it to be a positive part of her life currently, she also reflected that negative friends had become negative influences and often led her to get into trouble in and out of school. She didn't expand too much upon this, other than describing getting into fights at school. She had begun to make more positive peer relationships at school and had undertaken some recent positive work experience which had been a turning point in her motivation to look more positively towards the future and her aspirations to build her confidence and eventually to become an actor. Amara felt that the GOFG project, particularly through her relationship with her mentor was supporting her to achieve her more intermediate outcomes towards her end goal outcome of becoming an actor. She felt that the GOFG had fitted with where she was at and that she had really enjoyed her participation which had kept her motivated to continue her engagement and complete the project.



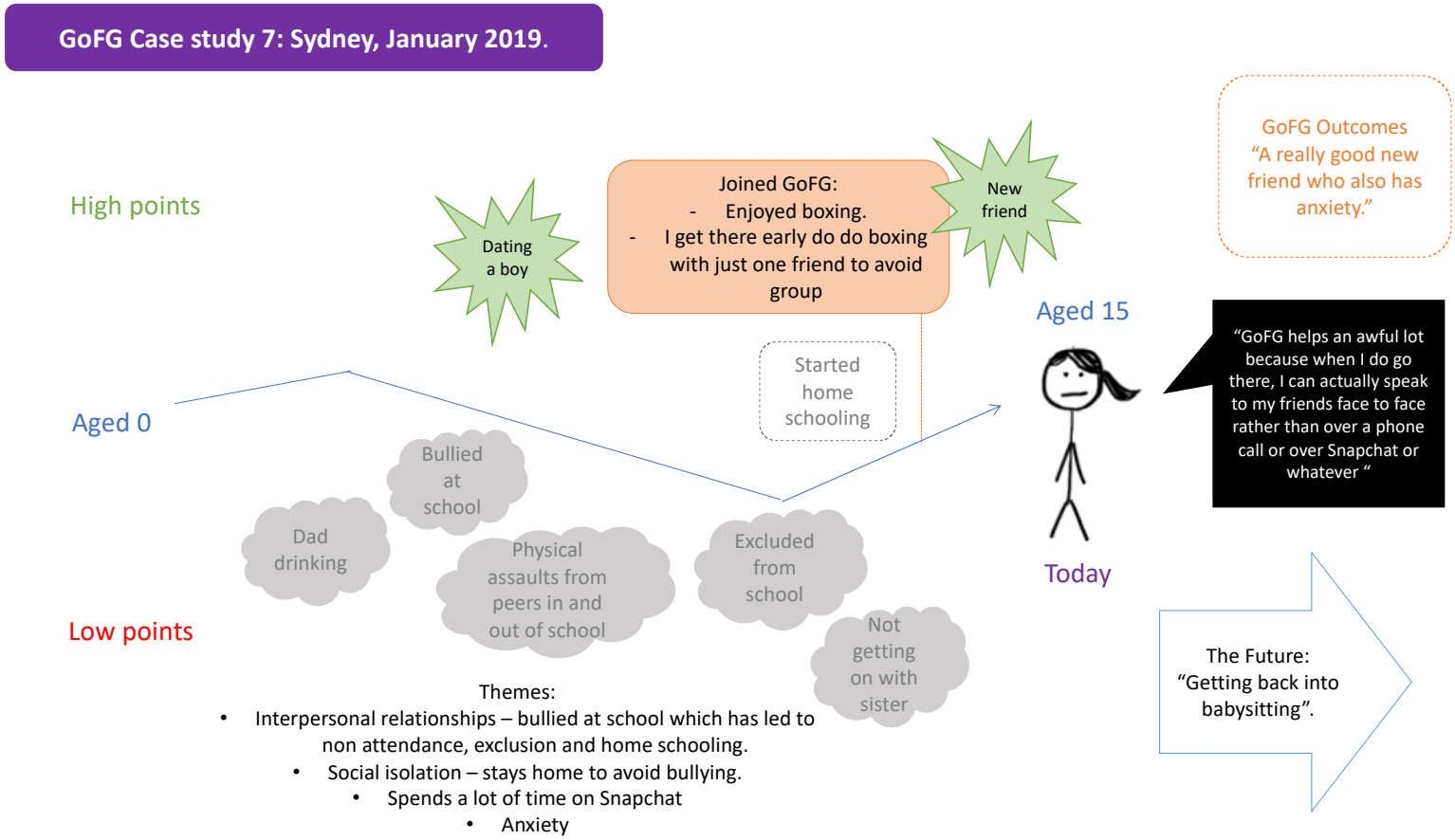
Patricia is a 15-year-old girl who was at school, preparing for her GCSEs. She had almost come to an end of her involvement with GOFG. Her Life Story centred around her family and the challenges of being a carer for her mother who has a disability and also having a father and brother living some distance away from her and her mother. Patricia felt that she lacked confidence and had been pushed to grow up quickly because of these circumstances and wanted the opportunity to engage in a project that offered activities that she wanted to do – something for herself. This was a particular appeal of GOFG, particularly the mentor relationship and motivated her engagement with the project. Whilst she didn't identify a particular turning point of her Life Story, she did reflect on moving away from negative peer groups to more positive ones at school and that she thought the GOFG project had enabled her to make more positive new friendships. This had enabled Patricia to build her confidence by meeting new people and doing something for herself. She felt her involvement had improved her emotional health and well being.



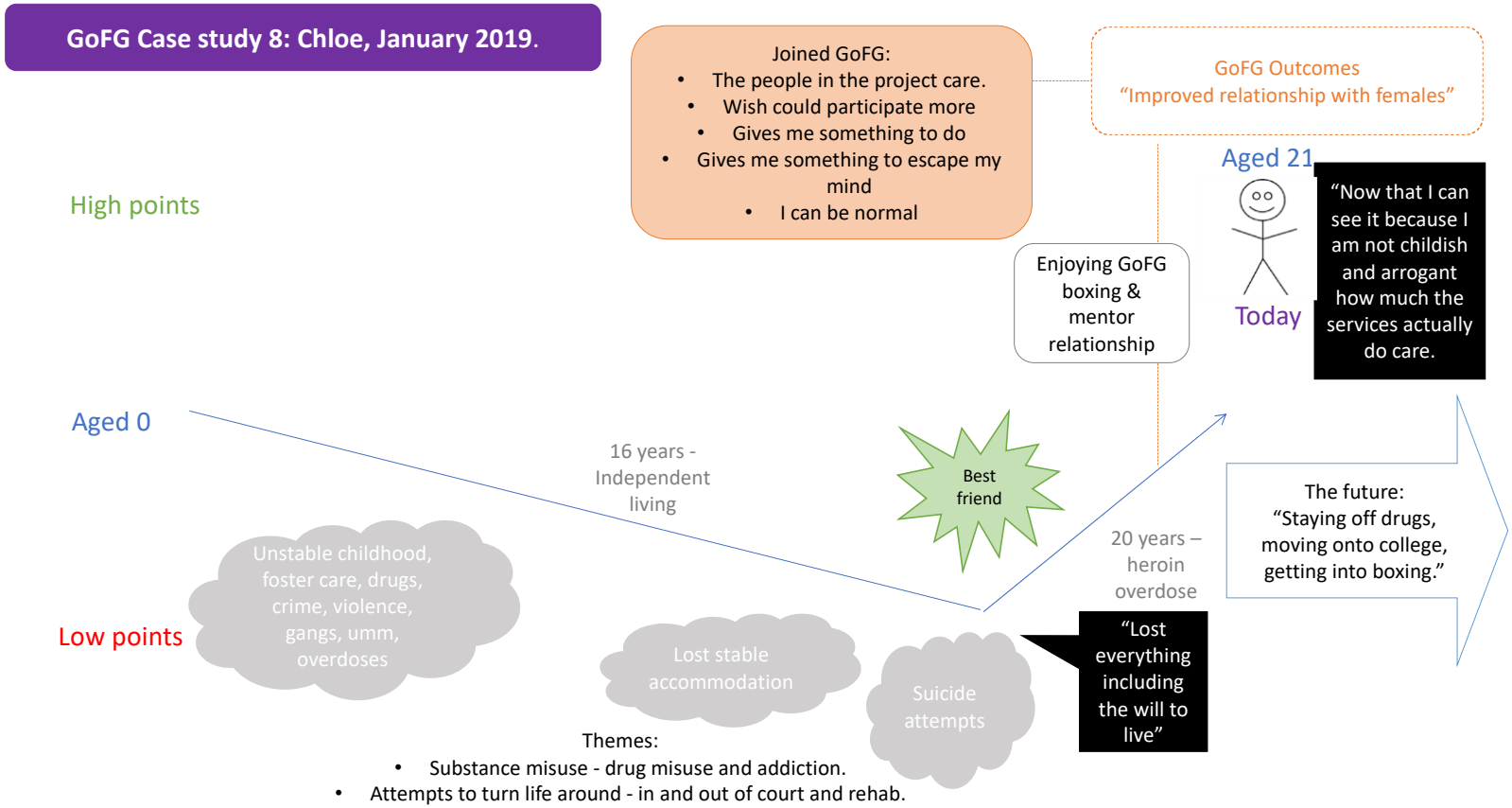
Emma is a 14 year old girl who is at school. She was 2 months into her involvement with the GOFG project when she did her Life Story interview. She began her Life Story with a focus on her family and family relationships with her father leaving the family home when she was younger. She went on to add that she was diagnosed with dyslexia and was shy and scared of being judged. At the same time Emma enjoyed school and had a positive friendship group but felt that she needed to continue to build her confidence. This realisation was a turning point and also a motivator to her engagement with GOFG as she was seeking more opportunity to make new friends and build her confidence. She particularly enjoyed the boxing activities and meeting new people. The project fitted with her Life Story at that point because of the social aspect of GOFG. She had began to talk more to other people in the project and viewed this to be an important outcome of her involvement.



Jenna is a 16 year old girl who is at school. She had just started with the GOFG project when she did her Life Story interview. Her early Life Story reflected on her family relationships and how her father moved out of the family home and how she didn't get on with her father. She viewed school as a negative part of her life story but did identify that she was good at English. Her reflections as to turning points centred around her confidence and her wish to step outside of her own comfort zone and try new things. This was the motivator for her engagement with GOFG and at that point in her life, the GOFG fitted with her because it provided opportunity to meet new people and try out new things. She enjoyed the activities that she had done so far and was motivated to continue to engage. Jenna had not quite figured out her longer-term goals but was pleased to have made progress in building her confidence, in part through her engagement with the GOFG project.



Sydney is a 15-year-old girl who is at school. She had almost finished her involvement with the GOFG project. Sydney's early Life Story centred around low points and she reflected upon her father's drinking as a particular early low point and difficulties at school being bullied and assaulted. This led to her non-attendance, exclusion and eventual home schooling which led to her feeling particularly socially isolated and spending a lot of time on social media. She also reflected on her anxieties and feelings of concern, particularly around social isolation. Starting home schooling was a turning point for Sydney and she felt enabled to engage with the GOFG project because she felt able to seek new friendships. The GOFG has fitted with her current Life Story position because it has given Sydney the opportunity to make friends. She has made one particular friendship that is important to her because they both experience anxiety and she feels supported by this new friendship. Sydney hadn't identified any long-term goals but felt that GOFG was helping her towards figuring it out by building her confidence and enabling her to speak to friends face-to-face rather than on social media.



Chloe is a 21-year-old young woman who had almost completed her engagement with the GOFG project. She recounted a complex Life Story that began with an unstable childhood that led to drug use, crime, gang engagement and onwards into spiralling drug use and suicide attempts. Chloe identified a significant and enduring friendship as a high point of her Life Story and that after the most recent overdose, she had reflected upon her life and wanted to make positive change. The GOFG offer had coincided with this turning point and she engaged with GOFG because it gave her something to do and a place where she could 'escape' and 'be normal'. The GOFG project has met Chloe's needs and enabled her to improve her relationships with other females and also engage with services. Chloe identified sports activities and also her relationship with her mentor as being particularly important elements of GOFG and motivated her engagement and progress towards her sought outcome, both intermediate and also longer-term outcomes.

5.10 Narrative Analysis of Case Studies - Themes

- **Life story low points**

Many of the GoYW Life Stories were heavily influenced by familial needs and relationships. The familial relationships of the G&YW were often difficult, challenging or absent. A number of interviewees had lost, reduced or particularly challenging relationships with a parent, particularly fathers and many also had challenging relationships with siblings. Two of the G&YW acted as carers for either a parent or for other younger siblings.

Low points were also frequently related to negative peer relationships and influences.

- **Peer influences**

In many of the Life Stories, G&YW considered that their story had often been influenced by negative peers, mostly at school. Many of the G&YW sought to move away from these negative influences, some had already done so, others were in the process of moving away and seeking more positive peer friendships. Many of the G&YW viewed the GOFG as a mechanism to support this change in enabling them to meet other young people and forge more positive and new friendships with other G&YW in their cohorts.

The G&YW did not really expand on the nature of negative peers and why / how their influences had led to 'trouble'. It was not appropriate to probe more deeply than the agreed interview schedule. However, it was clear that peer relationships and peers who were viewed to be 'negative' were related to the vulnerabilities of the interviewed G&YW.

- **Changing influences**

The G&YM early Life Stories were often influenced by familial relationships. As Life Stories progressed to the current day, influences became more commonly school and peer related, moving away from the family. Future life stories were influenced less by others and focused more towards the individual G&YW's agency and necessary actions in realising and achieving their aspirations.

- **Life story high points**

High points were frequently identified as making and starting more positive friendships and peer networks. This was often related to turning points and many G&YW had begun to make steps towards making more positive friendships and sought to develop this through GOFG.

- **Turning points**

Turning points of life stories were both positive and negative but many were associated with the G&YW's engagement with the GOFG project. It seems that turning points, whether positive or negative, provided a window of opportunity and motivated G&YW to seek change. These windows of opportunity seemed to coincide with uptake of the GOFG offer, but likely provided necessary conditions for engagement.

- **Emotional health and wellbeing**

A frequent theme across Life Stories was the emotional health and well-being of the G&YW. Across Life Stories emotional heath and well-being was frequently influenced by the low points that the G&YW had experienced and for many, the driver of their engagement with GOFG was a wish to improve their emotional health and well-being.

- **Important elements of intervention**

The mentee / mentor relationship was key to many Life Story accounts of where the GOFG project fits with each young person. The relationship seems to have had a number of functions: it was key to facilitating the young person's engagement with other GOFG activities such as sports and drama; it provided important support to each young person, particularly in reference to their emotional well-being; and, it provided the experience of a trusting and responsive relationship.

- **Sought outcomes**

The G&YW appeared to seek outcomes in pathways. Their more immediate outcome of the GOFG project were viewed to be those that demanded improved individual agency and improved emotional well-being. These included: confidence building; improved health and well-being; improved social skills; and, more positive interpersonal relationships.

These more intermediate outcomes were considered precursors to end-goal outcomes. End goal outcomes sought by G&YW were often more concrete outcome goals that included educational attainment, gaining qualifications towards chosen career pathways and earning a legitimate income. Some G&YW had not quite identified these longer-term outcomes.

G&YW commonly viewed that the GOFG project was facilitating their pathway towards achieving outcomes. Especially the more intermediate outcomes of enhancing their individual agency and wellbeing. The mentor relationship was considered to be a particularly significant contributor towards how the GOFG empowers G&YW towards achieving their sought outcomes.

- **Achieved outcomes**

The G&YW reflected more on achieved personal agency outcomes rather than more concrete and tangible achieved outcomes such as the AQA awards. However, most of the interviewed G&YW had not completed their involvement with GOFG. Many G&YW viewed that the GOFG project had helped them to improve their health and well-being.

Some G&YW had been able to reflect on their Life Story low points as something they had moved on from, often with the support of the GOFG project. This was more frequent amongst those who had completed the project. This was not universal, and some young people, especially those part way through the project, did not view that they had yet achieved positive outcomes.

- **Empowerment**

Many of the G&YW reflected upon their individual agency and the things they each needed to do in order to achieve the outcomes they aspired. The steps that they needed to complete to achieve their longer term, end goal outcomes were most often their own and in their own control rather than being external and dependent on others. The G&YW felt they needed to take responsibility and be empowered to achieve their goals. They needed to enhance their individual agency. Many reflected that GOFG was helping them to do this because it empowered them and built their confidence.

5.11 Partner feedback and reflection

The director of Positive Steps stated that GOFG had widened organisational capacity, and that the mentoring service was something that he would continue to fund as part of the core offer. The activities themselves helped strengthen the offer, as the mentors were able to refer G&YW into services that piqued the girl's interests. This in turn, raised the aspirations and confidence of both staff and young women. The challenges faced by Positive Steps, according to its management, were monetary, more investment was needed to recruit more mentors and reduce the burden on the two members of staff. Mentors reported that the programme helped them signpost G&YW to

activities they knew to be of high quality, and that the referring agencies were confident of the partnerships between all the activity providers. Mentors also felt that the programme was effective in bringing about positive change for the G&YW, and that the young women reported feeling happier and that they had made new friends as a result. Confidence raising among mentors and G&YW was a positive factor, and both parties felt that their social networks had increased as a result of GOFG, the mentors themselves felt more confident in receiving referrals and signposting on.

In terms of challenges, the mentors felt that a twelve -week programme was not enough time to establish a true meaningful relationship with some of the G&YW. They felt it took at least six weeks to establish a rapport and then build from there. Mentors also felt that more could be done to engage with those who DNA, and that if the programme was not limiting in terms of resources (mentor's time) and cohort limitations, then more time could be spent on trying to engage those who failed to attend appointments and/or activities. Mentors recommended cohorts be extended to twenty- four weeks as opposed to twelve.

The young people reported that the mentors helped reintegrate them back into education, and relieve boredom through the activities and mentoring sessions. The activities overall provided a much- needed social space for G&YW to relax and socialise with peers their own age, and in the Ketso work groups (reported below) young people reported that meeting new friends and time spent together was the favourite element of the programme. Some of the challenges young people reported was the distance to some of the activities, as not all were in the immediate local area, this was mitigated against by providing young people with a travel budget- bus pass or taxi fare- yet some young people did not like travelling alone. Boxing was reported as an enjoyable activity, yet it could be inconsistent as the coach often cancelled last minute, therefore, this was a challenge and a frustration for the G&YW and their mentors. The drama lacked structure at times, and young people reported feeling bored at times, linking this with the filmmaking helped, and the young people started to enjoy this more. Film-making was hugely popular, and the G&YW really enjoyed showcasing their films at the end of cohort celebration events. Football was only popular at the taster sessions, and the young people struggled to engage with this activity outside of the taster days. They reported feeling overwhelmed by the open sessions (public) and requested bespoke sessions tailored to them only. This was a challenge in terms of finance, as the project did not take into account the cost of bespoke sessions, therefore this activity was limited to taster sessions at T1/T2.

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, we summarise some of the key themes that have emerged from the evaluation. We revisit the formulated Theory of Change for the GOFG programme and consider its content against our own literature review and the evaluation findings. We conclude by discussing what has worked well and how the GOFG can develop its approach in the future.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The results of the evaluation of phase one are summarised as follows:

- On average, the G&YW were aged 15.87 years. The average ages of cohorts 3 and 4 were slightly higher than average.
- Cohorts 1 and 4 had higher percentages of Looked after Children, G&YW with Education, Health and Care Plans and G&YW involved with the YOS. Teenage pregnancy was low across the sample. Only one G&YW reported having been pregnant to full term.
- Cohort 2 had the highest dosage levels. On average, G&YW across the cohorts received some 12 contacts from GOFG.
- All SDQ subscales: the emotional problems; conduct problems; hyperactivity; and, peer problems along with the total difficulties and impact scale had mean scores at time one for the GOFG cohort higher than the national average scores. The GOFG cohort average pro-social score is lower than the national average score.
- At time one, the mean SDQ total score of 20.56 sits within the 'very high' category. At time three, the mean SDQ total score reduces to 19.5 which moves the average down a category to 'high'.
- It can be suggested that the GOFG cohort are beginning their involvement with the project with a high level of presenting need.
- It can also be suggested that the project design and referral pathways were sufficient enough to target those most in need.

Analysis of SDQ cohort data at times 1,2 and 3 indicates:

- The mean total difficulty score decreases over time.
- The conduct problems and impact scale means indicate improvements from time one, to time two and onwards to time three. The time three conduct problem scale mean indicates high need.
- The emotional problem scale mean reduces when comparing times one and time two, but increases at time three to slightly higher than time one. The hyperactivity scale mean follows a similar trend. Both time three means indicate high need.
- The peer problem scale mean increases from time one to time two before reducing again at time three, however the time three average is slightly higher than time one. The average score at time three indicates some need.
- The Pro-social scale mean is scored so that an absence of pro-social behaviour scores low. The GOFG cohort means reduce from time one, to time two and time three.

Looking at differences between cohorts:

- There were increasing levels of needs comparing cohorts 2, 3 and 4. SDQ total scores are the highest for cohort 4, by some 2 points. The mean emotional problems scale is also much higher for cohort 4 and the mean peer problems scale is higher for cohorts 3 and 4.

- SDQ mean total scores are similar for cohorts 2 and 4 and slightly lower for cohort 3. Cohort 4 has the highest mean scores in the emotional problems scale and conduct problems scale. Cohort 2 has the highest peer problems scale mean and cohort 2 also has the most positive prosocial scale mean. The impact scale means are similar across the cohorts.
- Looking at changes over time amongst the cohorts, the total difficulties score increases from time one to time two for cohort 2 but decreases in cohorts 3 and 4.
- Across all cohorts the emotional problems scale decreases.
- The mean peer problem scale scores increase across all cohorts, most of all in cohort 2.
- The prosocial scale improves in cohort 2 but reduces in cohorts 3 and 4.

The other psychometric scales indicate that:

- SWLS scores steadily rise in a positive direction from an almost neutral point, to an increasingly satisfied point.
- The SWEMWBS scale shows a reduction in total scores when time one is compared to time 3. The GOFG cohort indicates higher positive mental well-being at time one compared to time two, but this decreases again by time three.
- The MOSSI subscale also moves in a positive direction over times one, two and three. Whilst not as pronounced as the SWLS, it is a positive improvement.
- Higher positive mental well-being at time two compared to time one, but this decreases slightly by time three

The Ketso analysis reveals that:

- **Relationships** - were a key factor in the lives of G&YW, whether this was wanting to make new friends on the project, or stating that trusted adults were the most important factor in ameliorating some of the issues they faced. Some G&YW also felt that they needed to be better in control of their relationships to feel a sense of agency and autonomy, whereas some stated that negative familial ties held them back from achieving autonomy and aspiring for better.
- **Aspirations -** were crucial, G&YW wanted to travel more, and broaden their horizons in terms of the locality in which they grew up in. Many young people wished for more opportunities in their local area, and more facilities including- youth clubs, shops, and sport/leisure activities, and interestingly, more police. Poverty, and lack of opportunities and education, was a real concern for the young people.
- **Education -** was a key factor in generating social capital, and G&YW recognised that they needed more institutional support to enable them to achieve. However, the AQA awards did not really feature as a recorded positive benefit.
- **Loss and bereavement** - became a hallmark of the project, with many G&YW reporting have lost a parent or a significant other in the past few years.
- **Mental health** - presented as a key issue for most G&YW, and each cohort felt that more could be done to support G&YW with issues around mental health.
- **Impact** - G&YW felt that more time was needed on the project to generate significant change, and that meeting new people was the key to success and their engagement. Whether this was other G&YW on the project itself, or the mentoring relationship, is yet unknown. All the G&YW on the project reported enjoying themselves and the activities, and benefitting in some way from participating.

The narrative analysis of Case Studies also yielded a number of themes:

- **Life story low points** - many of the G&YW Life Stories were heavily influenced by familial needs and relationships and were also frequently related to negative peer relationships and influences.
- **Peer influences -** G&YW considered that their story had often been influenced by negative peers, mostly at school.
- **Changing influences -** G&YM early Life Stories were often influenced by familial relationships. As Life Stories progressed to the current day, influences became more commonly school and peer related, moving away from the family. Future life stories were influenced less by others and focused more towards the individual G&YW's agency and necessary actions in realising and achieving their aspirations.
- **Life story high points -**were frequently identified as making and starting more positive friendships and peer networks.
- **Turning points -** were both positive and negative but many were associated with the G&YW's engagement with the GOFG project.
- **Emotional health and wellbeing -** emotional health and well-being was frequently influenced by the low points that the G&YW had experienced and for many, the driver of their engagement with GOFG was a wish to improve their emotional health and well-being.
- **Important elements of intervention -** the mentee / mentor relationship was key to many Life Story accounts of where the GOFG project fits with each young person.
- **Sought outcomes -** outcomes were sought in pathways. Their more immediate outcome of the GOFG project were viewed to be those that demanded improved individual agency and improved emotional well-being. These more intermediate outcomes were considered precursors to end-goal outcomes. End goal outcomes sought by G&YW were often more concrete outcome goals
- **Achieved outcomes -** G&YW reflected more on achieved personal agency outcomes rather than more concrete and tangible achieved outcomes such as the AQA awards.
- **Empowerment -** G&YW reflected upon their individual agency and the things they each needed to do in order to achieve the outcomes they aspired.

The SNA highlights the following personal network themes and changes:

- **Family ties** - relationships with family members were complex. Most G&YW had strong close family ties with at least one parent and/or sibling. Some homogenous personal networks reflected strong cultural family traditions and expectations – this may have limited their support opportunities before joining GOFG. Some young people added family members to their support network when they were missing at the beginning (dad, brothers, sisters) whilst others dropped perceived negative ties. These changes suggest young people have agency in making decisions around who is included in their support networks, but it also suggests that some family relationships may experience disruptions and conflict
- **Friendships** - G&YW had few friends. Negative peer relationships were dropped over time (often school friends) and new friendships added (from the project). This speaks to the aspirations of young people engaged with GOFG to make new friends.
- **Emotional support and network diversity –** one of the most interesting findings is the emotional support measure. When personal networks become more diverse (including new friendships and mentoring relationship) and the quality of support networks improve, this can help increase emotional health and well-being. The six -month intervention group experiences a marked positive increase in levels of emotional support. In contrast, perhaps 3 months may be too short to have confidence in new contacts for support. We can speculate that it takes time to build trust and supportive relationships.

- **Practical support** – G&TW have access to some practical support from their personal networks but not as much as emotional support. Practical support might be low due to poverty – we cannot capture this directly via SNA, but we know deprivation is an issue.
- **Conflict with authority** - all young people had at least one and up to 6 members of their personal networks that experienced conflict with authority and included close family members as well as friends.

6.3 What has been the participant's experience of the GOFG project?

Every young person involved in GOFG reported a benefit; whether these benefits were as a result of meeting new friends, developing a relationship with a mentor, or trying a new activity. G&YW felt that the project was enjoyable, and exciting. The activities were mainly new experiences for the young people and were mainly well attended. Boxing proved to be the highest attended activity, with filmmaking a close second. Drama was enjoyable for the young people but only in short spells, and football did not really take off outside of the taster sessions. Life Story interviews support the throughput data with many G&YW particularly enjoying boxing and others enjoying drama. The activities allowed young people to feel good at something and build their confidence, as reported in the Ketso focus groups and Life Story Interviews, and also gain AQA qualifications as result. The AQAs were experienced as a tangible outcome – something to show for their efforts, a feeling reinforced by the Festivals of Achievement. Indeed, whilst the AQA's were not a specific USP for this project, the experience of receiving a qualification for participation across the four activities, was an enjoyable and worthwhile one for all those involved. Overall, the G&YW reported enjoying the space to come together on a weekly basis and 'hang out', particularly in a safe space with other young people of a similar age. The G&YW reported having previously problematic peer groups and the new and safe space of GOFG also enabled G&YW to make new and more positive friendships. The SNA interviews provide some evidence of this as personal networks changed with negative friendships dropped and new friendships made.

The mentoring provided the G&YW with a trusted adult, and someone to talk to. This was reported across the four cohorts as a positive experience. Exploring where the GOFG project fits with G&YW during Life Story Interviews revealed some insights into its process (which must also be incorporated into a revisited TOC) with it being key to facilitating G&YW's engagement with other GOFG activities such as sports and drama; providing important support to G&YW, particularly in reference to their emotional well-being and in providing the experience of a trusting and responsive relationship. Project mentors were named as important sources of support for the G&YW in the SNA interviews. Other trusted adult relationships, such as teachers and social workers were also mentioned as important. The G&YW's positive experience of mentoring goes some way to assuring that the GOFG is delivering its mentoring offer appropriately. Certainly, the GOFG mentoring element was experienced as a valuable part of the intervention.

G&YW experienced the GOFG project to enable their achievement of personal agency related outcomes such as health and well-being and confidence much more frequently than perhaps more tangible outcomes. It is also important to consider how the G&YW reflected upon their individual agency and the things they themselves needed to do in order to achieve the outcomes they aspired to. The G&YW felt they needed to take responsibility and be empowered to achieve their goals and enhance their individual agency. GOFG was helping them to do this by building their confidence and empowering them to work towards their own outcome goals.

The research element also provided the G&YW with a louder voice in which to express their needs and issues, and young people reported that they found the involvement in the research itself as

beneficial. Accordingly, this will help inform phase two thinking and planning, especially concerning user involvement, and the use of Participation Action Research Methods (PAR).

6.4 Is the GOFG project demonstrating any evidence of impact?

Analysis of the SDQ measures demonstrate some indicators of impact, notably that across the cohorts, mean total difficulty scores decrease over time. While this is based on a small sample size (n=53) it allows for a descriptive comparison and small impact measure across the programme piece. Accordingly, we can see the tables and graphs in section 5.5 impact scale measures that there are indicative improvements from time one, to time two and onwards to time three. These scores arguably go some way to demonstrating the effectiveness of this type of intervention, and the fact that each cohort presented with such a high level of presenting need (nearly twice the national average in some cases-) highlights the importance of services such as Positive Steps, who work with G&YW to tackle some of the inequalities and issues they face.

While we reduced the SDQ total difficulties score overall, interestingly, the total difficulties score for Cohort 2 increased at time two, even with a higher dosage of activities. We recognise that this is a strange outcome, as logic would have us believe that more time involved with the interventions would presumably reduce one's difficulties. As mentioned above, Cohort 2 benefitted the most in terms of dosage, and thus received a total of 28.5 doses (mentoring/activities/taster/celebration sessions) per person. This figure, however, does not correlate in terms of positive impact. Cohort 2 is an outlier in this respect, and we would argue that some young people do not benefit from an increased amount of 'hand holding'. Indeed, if we compare these scores to the qualitative data found in the case studies and Ketso focus groups, we can substantiate these claims and suggest that G&YW felt that their own autonomy and self -responsibility was the key to change, rather than a saturation of service involvement and activity. This is an important point to take forward given the research evidence to suggest that mentoring can have positive impacts if it is delivered in the right way to the right young people but other evidence shows that mentoring can sometimes have non-significant impacts, and if not implemented carefully there is also the risk of causing harm. It appears that dosage is an important factor in the GOFG mentoring offer.

Overall, each young person reported a positive impact for them personally, yet when we look at some of the figures presented in our results, we can see some discrepancies across the sub scales, in particular peer problems. In this subscale, the mean increased from time one to time two, and remained high at time three for those measured. We think that the peer problem scale was affected by mixing cohort groups 2 and 3. Due to the change in mentoring provider we combined groups over a six- month period, rather than separating them over three months each. This has evidently proved unsuccessful across some sub scale measures, and some G&YW felt that the group dynamic was disrupted as result. Therefore, we conclude that the amalgamation of cohort groups increased the peer problem scale, as G&YW reported higher scores than captured at baselines measures. While the same can be said for cohort 4 in terms of peer problems and pro-social measures, we can safely state that the presenting need of cohort 4 was extremely high as highlighted in section 5.2 and in discussions around personal networks and emotional and practical support in section 5.7 We tentatively argue that the increase in the peer problem scale can be indicative of groups with very high presenting needs and does not necessarily marry up with the qualitative data that suggests friendships were a key motivating factor in engagement. Hence, the chaotic nature of cohorts with 'high' to 'very high' presenting needs can sometimes skew the data by virtue of their chaotic nature, put simply; the changeable nature of their lives is represented in the self-reported data.

Cohort 4 was arguably our most vulnerable cohort in terms of presenting needs. The baseline total difficulties scores measured across cohort 4 averaged at 21.73, which was the highest baseline across the whole piece, and over twice the national average (a score of 10). Additionally, the emotional problems subscale also featured highly in cohort 4 with an average of 7.36, as opposed to 3 as a

national average baseline. We successfully managed to reduce this figure at time two for cohort 4 to 6.4, which is still significantly higher than the national average, yet does show some improvement. Therefore, what we can glean from these small figures and suggestions, is that when we compare content (dosage) Vs. quality (fewer activities, more focused delivery) it is safe to assume that the quality of the intervention is more important than the amount. This is reflected in the dosage across the cohorts, represented in table 10. There is similar evidence in relation to the personal network changes and emotional support measures with Cohort 4, represented in Table Twenty. Whilst the numbers are small this group significantly improved their emotional support scores from 12.88 to 14.1 scored out of a maximum of 16 points on the Norbeck Social Support Scale. Cohort 4 received the lowest amount in terms of dosage, yet benefitted the most, even when presenting with the highest level of need. The SNA data suggests that young people need time to build trusting and supportive relationships.

Moreover, the assessment batteries (SWLS/SWEMWBS/MOSSSI) presented in section 5.6 demonstrate positive impact across the three measures. There is a steady increase in satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) across the cohorts, and this is further reflected in the social support scale (MOSSSI). This clearly highlights that the impact that the project had on both these measures, and it is arguably reflective of the quality of the activities and mentoring. More interestingly, and less impactful, is the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS), this measure increased in the short term, yet decreased over time. Nonetheless, the time three measurements still managed to remain above baseline measures in terms of increased mental wellbeing. Therefore, we argue that the interventions contributed somewhat towards the G&YW satisfaction with life scales and mental wellbeing.

In summary

- Cohort 2 received the highest amount of interventions/dosage, yet demonstrated the lowest level of impact.
- Cohort 3 also received a significant amount of input, yet presented with the lowest amount of need, although we did achieve the highest impact measure with this group.
- Cohort 4 which was the longest cohort (6 months as opposed to 3 months) received the lowest amount of intervention yet presented with the highest need, however, we did demonstrate some arguable level of impact.

6.5 How well is the intervention working and what improvements can be made?

G&YW reported that the project was a positive experience, and that meeting new people was a key factor in their engagement and retainment. The programme comprised of a combination of mentoring, and AQA accredited sport and cultural activities for young people aged 14-21 years over an average of 3 months (cohort 4 was increased to 6 months). At first glance, it is arguable that the project had a positive impact on the 60 young women who engaged with at least one activity over the life of the project; reflected in the decrease of total difficulties scores across the majority of the cohorts and an improvement in the personal network emotional support scores, specifically for Cohort 4. To argue that this was solely as result of the programme would be foolish, yet we feel confident in stating that the evidence provides a descriptive narrative that requires further exploration. The mixed method approach provided us with the tools to unpack some of the issues the young people were facing, and also make some small steps towards painting a bigger picture for those working with G&YW with high levels of need.

Over the life of the project (3 years) we received 92 referrals from agencies who felt that G&YW attending their provision were in need, or at risk of harm. Of these 92 we successfully engaged with 60 young women i.e. they attended at least one mentoring session and/or taster event. Of the 60 young women, we retained 45 over a longer period of time, usually in the region of 3-6 months. Outside of the original taster sessions, which were usually held on a Saturday and involved G&YW

being able to sample each of the activities, we provided weekly sessions of boxing, drama, filmmaking, and in some instances, football. The activities were well attended, and on average, between 6-8 young people attended on a thrice weekly basis. The mentors supported the G&YW across each of the cohorts in attending the activities, and this was usually where the relationship between mentor and mentee developed. The mentors participated in the majority of the activities, and also completed the weekly attendance registers for each activity.

The original idea was that each activity would run weekly over a three-month period. We envisaged three cohorts of between 8-10 young women per annum, averaging around 90 young women over three years. We managed to retain fifty percent (n=45) of this number over a period of 3-6 months. The chaotic nature of the G&YW lives proved difficult at times, and an expectation that G&YW would attend activities thrice weekly was a big ask. Plus, the expectations placed on mentors also proved to be burdensome at times, and as much as the young people reported wanting more time on the project, it was felt that 6 months proved too long to sustain interest and motivation. As a project we saw attrition at month four and five and therefore make recommendations that this length of intervention is the optimum amount of time to see results, especially considering the drop in numbers attending beyond this time, and the self- reported measures against time three SDQ prosocial scale scores for cohort 4 (this is a cautious suggestion based on cohort's 4 small sample). The attrition also impacted our ability to complete all 11 SNA interviews as five participants did not attend the final group event. Those with only one network interview indicated lower levels of emotional and practical support than their other cohort 4 peers. It would have been interesting to see what changes, if any, they were able to make to their personal networks whilst involved with the project.

We consider the fact that four activities proved too much to sustain on a weekly basis, and therefore recommend a focus on quality over quantity in subsequent project phase planning. G&YW reported that the activities, while enjoyable, were not the sole reason for attendance. The mentoring relationship, and the ability to just 'hang out' with friends of a similar age, was a key factor that we simply did not expect. It's fair to say in this case; less is more. The activities as a 'hook for change'[3] [cxvi] proved successful in the first instance, and worked well on the taster days to help form cohorts and groups, however, moving forward, we would suggest a scaled back version of twice weekly activity alongside mentoring sessions, over a 4/5 month period. For some young people this may differ, especially when considering the apparent dosage effect, and it can be assumed that the quality of the intervention outweighs the quantity.

It is interesting that many of the G&YW reported an increase in positive peer relationships in their Life Story interviews and that making new friends (often through GOFG) was a high point, yet we have seen a rise in peer problem scales. Most Life story interviews were conducted part way through G&YW's involvement with GOFG. Perhaps there is an optimum point where positive peer relationships are made during GOFG and this tails off. For the G&YW that took part in the personal network interviews there is evidence to suggest the quality of support networks were more important than the quantity. G&YW made friends from the project but not all new friendships were internal. It is interesting to note that all young people had at least one and up to 6 members of their personal network that experienced conflict with authority, and this included close family members as well as friends. Where friends are those with a conflict score, young people appear to be exercising agency and making decisions to drop those ties from their close personal networks. Where family have a conflict score it is not so easy, or desirable, for the young person to disengage with them and this is further complicated by family members (siblings and cousins) close in age with whom G&YW have strong ties. It is possible the peer problem scales are capturing some of these network dynamics and overlapping relationships.

[3] Giordano describes a 'hook for change' as a positive influence that has the potential to be a catalyst for lasting change, usually promoted for the desistance of crime.

It is evidently important to consider G&YW's needs on a case by case basis; potentially integrating young people into the activities when it suits them best. This may work towards mitigating against the rise in peer problem scales and ensuring quality rather than quantity. This measure may also assist in reducing the SDQ total difficulties score over time, as well increasing satisfaction with life (SWLS) and social support scales (MOSSSI) as evidenced above. Emotional wellbeing (SWEMWBS scale) negatively decreased over longer periods of intervention and this is not uncommon across cohorts demonstrating various types of vulnerabilities.

The group- based nature of the intervention (drama, filmmaking, boxing and football) was two- fold. Boxing was the most popular in terms of attendance, and filmmaking certainly piqued the G&YW's interests; achieving the most AQA qualifications across the interventions. However, it's worth noting that the continuous group-based activities may have contributed to the increase in peer problem scales, and therefore, we would recommend some individual based activities with rigorous mentoring alongside, as an alternative to some of the more group-based programmes.

We certainly achieved some of our intermediate outcomes identified in the ToC (section 3.11), as G&YW reported feeling more physically fit, and more in control of their social networks. The change in the structure of the G&YW's personal networks over time show they are taking control of personal support networks, increasing the diversity of their relationships and dropping negative ties. Improving the quality of support networks can help increase emotional health and well-being. The six- month intervention group experienced a marked positive increase in levels of emotional support. In contrast, perhaps 3 months may be too short for G&YW to have confidence in new contacts for support. SDQ scores showed a positive trend in reducing emotional problems, and this maps directly onto the intermediate outcomes of 'enhancing positive emotions'. The project arguably contributed towards young women achieving better emotional well-being, as evidenced in the SWEMWS scales and also within Life Story interviews where some insight was gathered regarding process (the mentor relationship building G&YW's confidence and empowerment / building individual agency). However, we do recognise that we need to explore and understand this better and that more work needs to be done in this area. The AQA awards, and the fact that we awarded 200 awards to 60 young people, is a tangible outcome, and we feel confident that we met the target of 'raising educational opportunities for G&YW'. Lastly, in as much as we saw discrepancies across some of the sub scales of the SDQ measures, in particular peer-problem increases, we felt that we created a safe space for G&YW to come together and hang out, therefore working towards achieving outcome no. 5: 'developing friendships and support networks'. We also held festival of achievements at the end of each cohort whereby we invited G&YW to the university for food, and to showcase their films on the big screens. It was at these festivals that we also presented the young women with their certificates. Cohort 4 also featured as part of a fashion shoot with the Manchester Fashion Institute and their Portrait Youth Series[4]. This series was held at the same time as The Manchester International Festival 2019, and the young women had their photographs displayed in the local community as part of a public exhibition. This assisted in achieving the stipulated outcome of 'creating a legacy for G&YW through sports, arts and cultural activities'. Overall, we made headway on each of the five outcomes, and thus worked towards achieving positive outcomes for all the young women engaged.

6.6 Challenges

- The biggest challenge GOFG faced was switching mentoring providers in year two. This derailed the project for three months and required us to merge cohorts two and three to compensate for lost time. As a result of switching partners, we also re-evaluated our data

[4] https://www.portraityouth.com/series-3

collection methods and decided on the assessment batteries we have discussed throughout this report. Therefore, cohort one did not receive the same assessments as cohorts 2/3/4. We did pilot another assessment tool used by the previous mentoring partner, yet on reflection, this did not yield much data. This explains why cohort one is not included in the data.

- Smaller challenges included transporting young people to activities. This consumed a large portion of the mentor's time and was costly in terms of travel budgets. This was mitigated against by using the time spent in the car to hold mentoring sessions.
- The AQA scheme was not employed by the activity partners in the way it could have been. It was envisioned that each activity would be able to award at least three awards each. This never transpired, and the AQA's were mainly achieved in the taster sessions, therefore limiting the amount each young people could achieve.
- We received a total of 92 referrals across three years, and as much as we engaged 65% of these (n=60) we reluctantly allowed 32 to drop through the net. Positive Steps mentors in the first instance (cohorts 2/3) proceeded to 'chase down' referrals if G&YW did not attend sessions or return phone calls. In the end, this proved to be too costly in terms of mentor's time, and therefore, by cohort 4 we adopted a two-week window whereby we would close the case if we had not had any contact.

6.7 Enablers

- A good working partnership between the seven partners enabled the GOFG project to achieve its intermediate outcomes. This was achieved through clear pathways of communication from inception, and prior trusted working relationships.
- Comic Relief were a flexible funder and provided support throughout the life of the project. This was greatly appreciated and allowed GOFG to adapt and grow throughout the process.
- The research team were also adaptive and modified assessment batteries and data collection tools when they were proving unsuccessful or cumbersome.
- Positive Steps' mentors were highly adaptive and patient with the changing nature of the programme, and especially concerning the chaotic nature of some young people.
- The established relationships that Positive Steps mentors had with existing agencies- social work, YOS, and education increased the referrals into the project.
- The project was led and co-ordinated by Manchester Metropolitan University, this allowed for GOFG to employ the full resources of the institution, and this assisted in the governance of a large contractual research grant comprising of seven partners.

6.8 The Theory of Change revisited

When returning to the TOC we can safely state that we achieved some, if not all, of the intermediate outcomes. The end goal outcomes are on-going, and phase two will involve a reflection and a re-working of the TOC, as well as a re-apportioning of resources and partners. We were correct in our consideration of the pre-conditions outlined in the TOC, and it is fair to assume that the same will apply across phase two. However, with the learning from the past three years incorporated, we envision a more robust programme that is flexible enough to meet the changing demands and risk factors concerning G&YW's emotional and mental wellbeing needs. Indeed, as the GOFG project continues into its next phase, continued collection of SDQ scores and a systematic process of data collection will support more in-depth analyses and an assessment of changes in child-level strengths and difficulties that will support the team in improving outcomes for children and families.

The assumptions we made in phase one still hold true, and in as much as we assumed G&YW would be interested in the activities, we also need to consider the fact that given the option the young women may have chosen something different to what we offered. Moreover, empowerment takes many forms, and to presume that this can be achieved over a short space of time needs re-thinking; evidenced by the changing nature of the SDQ emotional problems subscale, and the additional assessment batteries demonstrating fluctuation around emotional and mental wellbeing. All this considered, it is envisioned that Positive Steps will lead on the governance and activity allocation, thus freeing up the research team to continue to administer the assessment batteries and qualitative measures. Initial plans include an extension of mentoring activities over an 18-month period, with a tighter focus on quality rather than quantity. This may require a reduction in the number of cohorts we engage with, and the timeframe in which we engage. It is envisioned we will work with around 50 young people over a sixteen-week period incorporating the findings from phase one.

Some additional key learnings to take forward when reviewing the TOC are:

- G&YW's sought outcomes of the project as well as the sought outcomes of GOFG.
- Additional activities of GOFG and the relevance of group / individual activities and also dosage.
- The role of windows of opportunity as a precondition.
- A reflective and staged development of the mentoring relationship and its role.
- Intermediate outcomes may be more familial, and peer based for G&YW, longer term outcomes may be more individual based.
- Pathways towards outcomes.
- The importance of health and well-being and understanding the stepwise pathways towards such outcomes.

6.9 Research approach

The evaluation of phase one of GOFG has been able to explore the implementation of GoFG; including its structure, resources and its processes of delivery. It has also been able to explore the mechanisms of impact: how GoFG activities and their interactions with young people may enable change, along with its context and the external factors that have influenced the delivery and functioning of GoFG. Key learnings include:

- TAG Life Story Interview approach, built on narrative identity research has been especially successful in establishing where a young person is in their life and how the GOFG project fits with where that young person is at in their life. The approach explores the relevance of GOFG to each young person as well as its outputs and impact.
- The psychometric test battery, refined after phase 1, has been well experienced by both participants and mentors.
- In order to conduct interviews with a member of the GOFG cohort, a number of modalities must be offered including in person and on the telephone and that perseverance is important.
- Phase 1 has shown some early successes of GOFG and it is now important to understand the mechanisms of the project and how it achieves success, together with any emerging impacts.
- G&YW are happy to engage in research when approached in the right way, and fully appraised of the benefits and outcomes.

It is important that any onwards phase of the GOFG project is supported by multi- modal research that extends and builds upon the research conducted during phase one, and should involve young people from inception to conclusion, with longitudinal follow-up.

6.10 Additional learning

Some additional learning points from phase one are highlighted:

- A flexible and responsive approach is essential.
- Accordant to previous research, the emotional well-being and mental health of the cohort are prominent needs amongst the GOFG cohort.
- Safeguarding is emerging as the prominent need of the cohort, rather than criminal justice and criminogenic needs.
- We need to refine GOFG's Theory of Change and define activities, outputs, outcomes and impact of GOFG.
- We need to establish how GOFG sits within wider safeguarding frameworks.
- Relative high levels of support from family is a predictor of engagement with the project – GOFG phase 2 may need to focus attention on referrals where those support structures do not exist or are of poor quality.
- The activities were designed by the project partners and may not be the most suitable in terms of engagement and enjoyment for G&YW
- The activities appear less important than the ability to interact with peers and to access the support of mentors.
- Mentors need to be resourced to enable them to engage over longer periods of time with the highest risk groups.
- Structured activities may not be suitable for those with the highest need, and a more bespoke approach may be needed to engage those reticent to attend a group- based activity.
- Clear and established referral pathways are paramount to engaging with G&YW most in need.
- Referring agencies need to have a trusted relationship with the intervention provider to enable them to feel confident in referring those most in need.
- AQA awards are appealing for those already engaged in the activities and keen to enhance their opportunities, they are not appealing as a stand-alone intervention.
- Understanding the emotional and practical support networks of G&YW at different stages of the programme can be illuminating. The literature suggests that mentors are an important part of those support structures for young people.
- It might be useful to explore the influence of the mentoring relationship further from a network perspective to assess the ways in which these relationships can complement rather than compete with the other important relationships in a young person's life. Mentors can link young people with other community- based groups and services.
- In most cases the personal networks have expanded, but not all. The change in structure of the networks between both timepoints indicates that young people have made active decisions about who they want to support them, but also involvement with the project has led to a change in support structures, expanded friendship networks, and introduced greater network diversity. This is viewed as a positive indicator for social capital in the SNA literature.

6.11 Conclusion

This report has presented the findings of an independent process evaluation of the GOFG project. Working with a complex group of G&YW who are gang engaged or presenting with other

vulnerabilities is challenging. It is a challenge that GOFG has responded to with some indicators of success. Certainly, there are lessons that have been learned that will be taken forward, but GOFG has delivered some positively experienced intervention to this vulnerable cohort of G&YW with evidence of early and emerging impact.

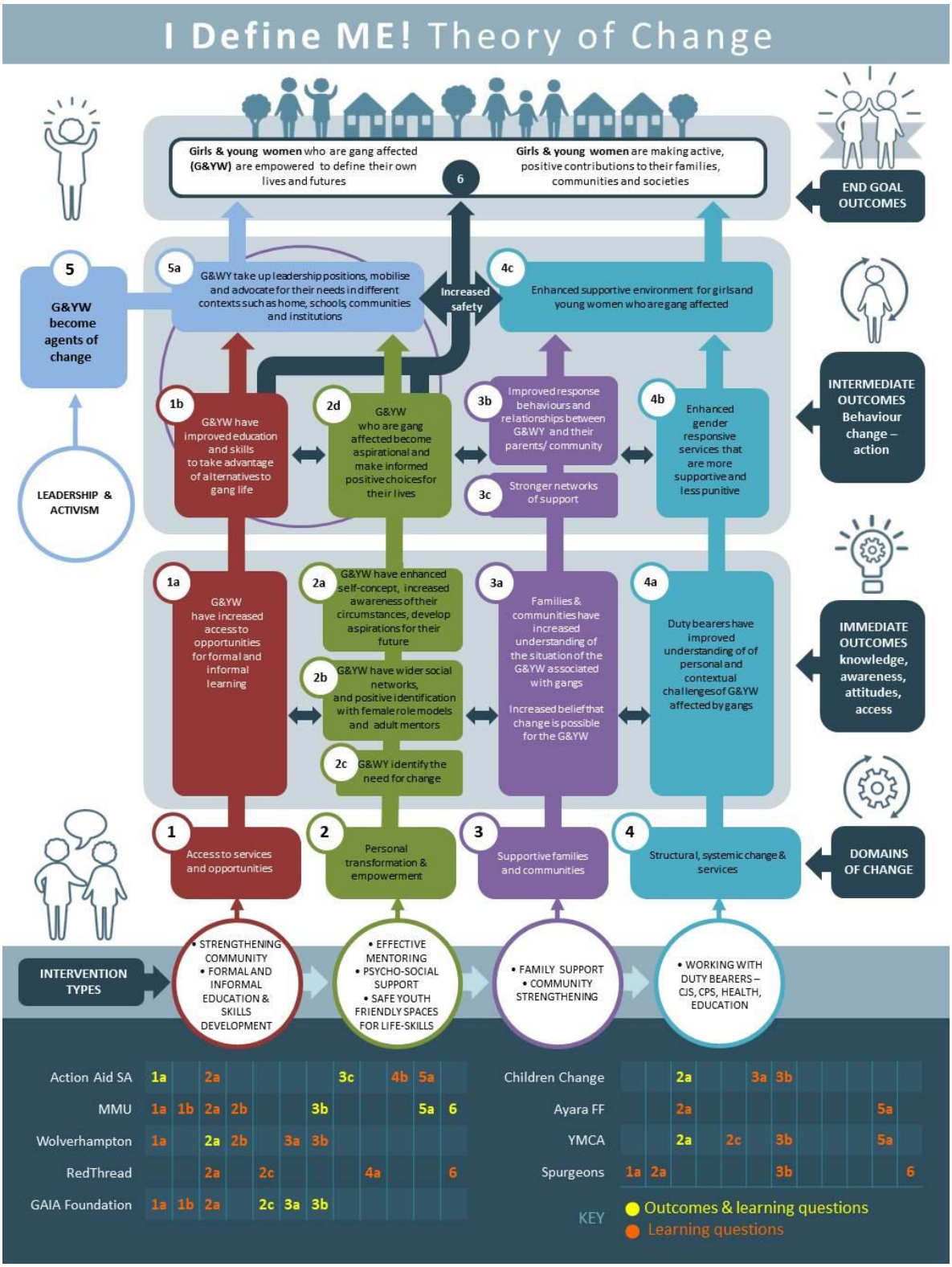
We conclude by reviewing the GOFG project against the DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability)[cxvii].

1. Relevance: The GOFG project objectives are consistent with many of the recipients' requirements but a review of the offered activities would improve the relevance of GOFG for the G&YW. Importantly, it seems that cohort 4 was the most vulnerable cohort in terms of presenting needs and the parameters of this cohort included high levels of teenage pregnancy, YOS and children's services involvement and EHCPs. We suggest that the requirements of cohort 4 were the most relevant of the project and the response and impact of GOFG towards this cohort will best inform onwards phases of delivery.
2. Effectiveness: GOFG achieved many of its sought and expected objectives; G&YW reported feeling more physically fit, and more in control of their social networks; there were positive trends towards 'enhancing positive emotions' and in achieving improvements in the emotional wellbeing of G&YW.
3. Efficiency: the GOFG project has been experienced as largely efficient. Not without its challenges, but its resources/inputs have been economically converted into results.
4. Impact: GOFG has demonstrated many early indicators of impact and we have been able to explore both positive and negative primary and secondary effects produced by GOFG, though at this stage in the shorter term. We have also begun to explore the direct and indirect effects of GOFG that have been intended as well as unintended, particularly through analysis of SDQ and other measurement scales over time. Our understanding of impact is affected by the small sample size and time frame of measurement and can be built upon in onwards stages of GOFG.
5. Sustainability: the sustainability of GOFG and its offer are not yet understood. It will be important to consider the ability of key stakeholders to sustain its intervention benefits after funding from Comic Relief ceases by using locally available resources. Again, this will be explored during phase two.

GOFG has been positively experienced as a relevant intervention for gang engaged and vulnerable G&YW. The qualitative and quantitative findings of this mixed methods process evaluation reveal early indicators of impact.

Whilst this study suggests some positive impact of GOFG in the short term, it is important to review the longer-term impact. If possible, wider proxy measurements of impact could be included in onwards research that include children's services data.

Appendix One



Appendix Two

GOFG Case Study Interview Schedule

Introduction: explain that we are looking at the effectiveness of GOFG. We want to look particularly at how the project may have impacted on you, but from your perspective. Lots of 'other' people thinks lots of things - it is your story and you are the expert.

Demographics: ask,

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Why involved in GOFG

Life History: explain that this way of doing research involves you thinking about your life as a story - you are the storyteller. You do not have to tell me everything that happened in your life, but instead I would like to hear about what you think/ feel is important with regard to your life and your offending behaviour. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions.

Instead, your task is simply to tell me about some of the most important things that have happened in your life and how you imagine your life developing in the future.

1. Can you describe briefly your present life situation?

The following questions should include as possible: where, what, who involved, what you were thinking and feeling, impact and what this experience says about who you are or who you were....

2. Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your life that stands out as an especially positive experience. (pride, respect, happiness, joy)
3. Thinking back over your entire life, please identify a scene that stands out as a low point, (despair, shame or embarrassment, disrespect, unhappiness)
4. Can you tell me of a serious turning point in your life? An episode that marked an important change in you or your life story? (where you have undergone substantial change)
5. Can you describe your biggest life challenge to date?
6. Looking back over what we've talked about, can you please identify the single person, group or organisation that has had the greatest positive influence on your life story?
7. Looking back over what we've talked about, can you please identify the single person, group or organisation that has had the greatest negative influence on your life story?
8. Please describe what you see to be the next chapter in your life. What is going to come next in your life story?
9. Looking back over your entire life, please identify and describe what you now consider to be the greatest single challenge you have faced in your life.
10. Looking back over your entire life story with all its chapters, scenes, and challenges, and extending back into the past and ahead into the future, do you discern a central theme, message, or idea that runs throughout the story? What is the major theme in your life story? Please explain.

Services and interventions:

1. What 'services/ interventions' have you accessed as part of GOFG?
2. Has GOFG impacted your life story and if it has, could you explain how?

Ask the participant if there is anything else important to add / note?

Task: end the session by co-producing a time line to summarise the participant's life story and its alignment with GOFG (this will be used to illustrate case studies).

Thanks and a debrief.

Appendix Three

Referral Form

This project is specifically designed for young women at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and/or serious youth violence in Greater Manchester. It is an activity based research project in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University and Comic Relief.

Referrals must meet these criteria:

- Female
- Aged 14-24 years
- At risk of CSE and / or serious youth violence in Greater Manchester.

YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS

Full Name	
DOB	
Address	
Telephone No.	
Ethnicity	

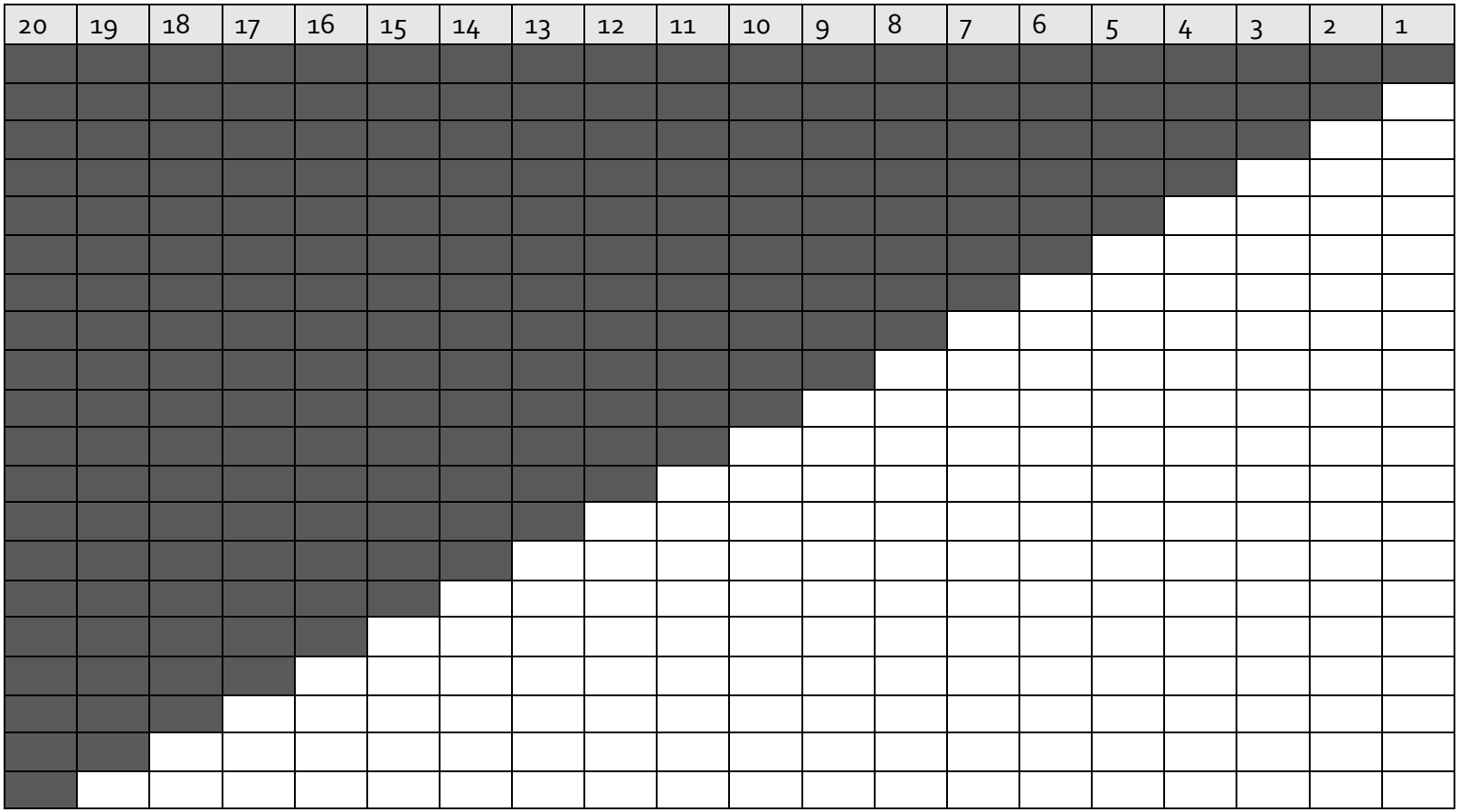
REFERRER'S DETAILS

Referral Agency	
Worker's Name	
Notes	(please describe, in brief, the nature of your involvement with this young person)
Risk Factors	(please list any known risk factors we should be aware of when engaging with this young person)

Please return completed forms using this address: yjs.admin@oldham.cjsm.net

Appendix Four

Getting Out for Good: Social Network Questionnaire V2 – Follow instructions A to D



0 = not important / Don't know each other 1 = of little importance to each other 2 = somewhat important 3 = important 4= very important	**A)** Thinking about the time **before** joining the project. We want to know which people are important to you or play an important role in your life. We understand that sometimes people can have a positive influence on you and other times it can be negative. If someone indicates a negative influence put **'–'** minus next to the name. • Let's start with your family…. • There may also be other people in your social circle e.g. friends, schoolmates/training…

ID	Nick Name	Gender	Relationship	Age	**0-4**	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												

(0–4)
0 - not at all (not important)
To
4 - a lot (very important)

Q7 answers
Y / N / DK

20													

B) Fill in Gender / Relationship /Age for each person (if you are not sure about their age a rough guess will do).

C) How important are these people to you? **0** = not important at all / **4** = very important

D) Ask questions **1 to 7** for each person in their network.

Instructions: When asking the questions ask Q1 for all people listed – Then ask Q2 for all people listed until you complete Q7

Affect1

1) How much does this person make you feel liked or loved?

Affect2

2) How much does this person make you feel respected or admired?

Affirm1

3) How much can you confide in this person?

Affirm2

4) How much does this person agree with your actions or thoughts?

Aid1 (short term)

5) If you needed to borrow £10, get a lift to the doctor, or some other immediate help, how much could this person usually help?

Aid2 (long term)

6) If you were confined to bed for several weeks, how much could this person help you?

Q7 Added: Has this person ever been in trouble with the police or any other authority (e.g. social work, youth offending team or excluded from school)?
Yes (Y), No (N), Don't know (DK).

Reference: von der Lippe, H. and Gamper, M (2016) Drawing or Tabulating ego-centred networks? A mixed-methods comparison of questionnaire vs. visualization-based data collection. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 20(5), pp.425-441.

*Questions and order listings, using 5-point Likert items, are those recommended by the Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire.

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